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Report

Rural Relief due to drought...



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REPORT

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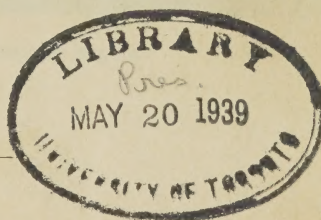
RURAL RELIEF

DUE TO

DROUGHT CONDITIONS AND CROP FAILURES

IN

WESTERN CANADA



1930-1937

Published by authority of the Hon. JAMES G. GARDINER, Minister of Agriculture,
Ottawa, 1939.

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Forty bushels to the acre—South of Regina.

The HONOURABLE JAMES G. GARDINER,
Minister of Agriculture,
Ottawa, Canada.

SIR,—I have the honour to submit herewith a report on the rural relief problem as found in the three middle west provinces, with special emphasis on the situation in Saskatchewan, the province which has suffered most from the crop failures of the past eight years.

The purposes of this report are outlined in the Foreword.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

E. W. STAPLEFORD.

REGINA, Saskatchewan.
April, 1938.

RURAL RELIEF IN THE PRAIRIE PROVINCES

BY

E. W. STAPLEFORD

Acknowledgments should be made to the Hon. R. J. M. Parker, Minister of Municipal Affairs, and to the Deputy Minister, Mr. J. J. Smith, under whose department relief is administered in the Province of Saskatchewan; also to Dr. F. Hedley Auld, Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Saskatchewan, and to Mr. A. MacNamara, Deputy Minister of Public Works and Labour, Manitoba, who is also Commissioner of Relief for that Province, to Mr. W. W. Dawson, Director of Relief for Saskatchewan, and to Mr. A. A. MacKenzie, Commissioner of Relief and Public Welfare for Alberta. These gentlemen were unfailing in their courtesy in supplying needed information. Mention should be made of the co-operation of Mr. John Vallance, Mr. W. L. Jacobson and Mr. Mark Mann of the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation offices, Regina, Mr. G. J. Matte, Commissioner of the Northern Settlers' Re-establishment Branch, Saskatchewan, Prof. F. E. Wagg and Prof. G. E. Britnell of the Department of Economics, University of Saskatchewan and of Miss Norah Grant for her painstaking work as Secretary.

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Foreword

This report is an attempt to tell as briefly as possible the story of the crop failures from which the West has suffered for the past eight years. As the full impact of the drought was felt chiefly in the province of Saskatchewan the major portion of the report is devoted to that province.

An effort has been made to set forth the story of the hardships which the Prairie farmer has had to face during this period and the effects which those hardships have had upon him. The generous response of the Federal Government to meet an emergency of Dominion-wide importance is dealt with and also the fine gesture of the people of Canada, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, who sent into the drought-stricken areas over two thousand carloads of food and clothing as voluntary relief.

In addition to this, the report endeavours to set forth the long-time plans which are being worked out in order to make it possible for the farmer to continue to produce wealth from the prairie soil in comparatively dry years, and also to make it possible for him to support himself even in a period of protracted drought.

Introduction

One of the greatest social problems with which modern society has to contend is that relating to the relief of those who, for various reasons, are not able to provide themselves with the basic necessities of life. Newer countries, like Canada and the United States, did not feel the problem acutely until the reconstruction period following the war. The older European countries, for many centuries, have been compelled to deal with the increased economic burden caused by the fact that many of their people were not self sustaining and required social aid.

The problem of relief is not new. It goes back to very ancient times. In primitive societies the problem did not exist. If the hunting was good all enjoyed the feast. If the hunting failed all suffered alike. But, as society became more highly organized, class divisions arose and we find a marked cleavage between those who had plenty and those who were in need. In early tribal and city state societies, relief was largely in the form of mutual aid to one's fellows, or private benevolence on the part of those in more fortunate circumstances to those in distress. It was prompted by an instinctive sympathetic reaction to the distress of others, and also by the knowledge that it contributed to the general advantage of the community.

Beginning with the Christian era and during the period of the Middle Ages, the Christian church and the system of Feudalism took care of the problem of relief. The feudal lord held himself responsible for the welfare of all those attached to the feudal manor, and the church had monasteries and hospitals scattered all over Europe for the care of the sick, and the poor, of neglected children and of the aged and infirm.

Great social and economic changes, resulting from the growth of trade and commerce, led to the gradual breakdown of Feudalism and the rise of large cities. New and changing conditions brought about changes of occupation, greater freedom of movement, greater opportunities for the capable and enterprising and greater numbers in need of assistance. The church and private benevolence alone could not cope with the situation, and it became the responsibility of municipal and national authorities to assume most of the burden. In England the act of Queen Elizabeth of 1601 established a system of local taxation for relief. Out of this legislation grew up the system of "out door relief" which was later brought to the American colonies and to Canada, and from which all our modern social relief measures take their rise.

Unsatisfactory experiences in the past, arising out of inadequate and unsuitable institutional care and indiscriminate relief, have led to the modern scientific approach to the question and a careful classification of dependent persons into three main groups, as follows:

- I. Various types of persons needing special care suited to their needs, such as dependent and neglected children, the aged and infirm, the sick, the insane and mentally deficient, the blind, the deaf and the disabled (either through industry or war).
- II. Persons suffering from the effects of unemployment, either temporary or prolonged and their dependents.
- III. Persons suffering through natural disasters, or from what is sometimes termed an act of God, such as storms, floods, earthquakes and drought.

Provision for the care of these three groups of persons needing social aid has been accepted as the responsibility of governments in Europe, in the United

States and in Canada. A heavy financial burden has been placed upon the people of these countries to meet the obligations arising therefrom.

Canada has developed a very comprehensive program of social services, seeking out the best methods of caring for the various types included in Group I. Annual budgets of the Dominion and Provincial Governments reveal the vast and increasing expenditures for such social services as child welfare, mothers' pensions, hospitals and sanatoria for the sick, both physical and mental, pensions for the aged and disabled.

In regard to Group II, persons suffering from the effects of unemployment, Canada, as a new and expanding country, has not had the problem until recently to the extent that it has existed in older countries. Municipal authorities, for the most part, by direct relief, have cared for needy families and provincial government employment agencies have assisted those seeking work. But with the financial depression beginning in 1929 the country was faced with a problem of the first magnitude. The municipal and provincial authorities were confronted by a situation with which they were unable to cope and the Dominion Government came to the rescue in a generous way, both as to direct relief and also in providing relief work on a large scale.

Group III includes those suffering from the effects of some major natural disaster over which man has but little control. Man, in his struggle for existence, has had to learn how to control nature and to subdue her to his service. He has accomplished much. He has domesticated animals, developed plant life for his use, he has harnessed great waterfalls to give him power. But, sometimes nature gets the better of him. Disasters from natural causes suddenly overcome him and reduce him to a state of poverty and dire necessity. Volcanic eruptions, floods, fires, storms, earthquakes, pestilence and drought—these are catastrophes that tax his greatest powers. When they occur, they bring enormous losses and suffering which necessitate not only immediate relief but often long continued aid. They may cease to be local problems and demand the resources of the whole nation. In emergencies of this kind, direct relief on a generous scale is imperative. But while this aid should be looked upon as temporary, it should always be associated with constructive measures that will prevent or lessen the ravages of such calamities in the future so far as it is within the power of human ingenuity and enterprise. While the United States frequently has had to contend with such national disasters as earthquakes and floods in addition to the drought in their "dust bowl" during the last few years, the drought in Western Canada has been the most serious national disaster with which the Dominion has had to deal.

From this brief review it may be seen that the problem of relief is a very old one. Gradually developing from private benevolence, relief has been accepted as a major responsibility of modern governments although there are still vast sums of money privately contributed for this purpose. Canada has had to meet her full share of such problems. In a splendid way she is gradually developing and extending her social services. Her difficulties in meeting the relief problems resulting from unemployment of the depression period have been tremendous, and have been augmented by the serious situation which developed in Western Canada from the prolonged drought and crop failures in the great wheat-growing areas of the Prairie Provinces.

Before dealing specifically with the relief problems of the three Prairie Provinces it is well to point out that every young country faces the difficulties of the pioneer stage. The early settlers, by the slow process of trial and error, learn how to meet and overcome the peculiar hardships associated with the development of a new country. The early history of the opening up of Canada is one long story of privation courageously endured by the settlers, seeking new homes for themselves on the banks of the St. Lawrence.

Even after more than one hundred years of settlement, life was very difficult for these adventurous colonists. The following excerpts found in the-

Canadian Archives and quoted by Dr. H. A. Innis in his *Canadian Economic Documents, 1497-1783* (University of Toronto Press) give a very vivid picture of the sufferings of the people of those early days when drought or insect pests or rust ruined the crops. One can visualize the people anxiously looking down the St. Lawrence river awaiting the arrival of the relief ships from France. These letters sound very much like letters that are being written to-day in the drought-stricken areas of Saskatchewan and Alberta.

EFFECTS OF A POOR HARVEST

From Canadian Archives, CHIA, LXVII, 70-71

Response au mémoire du Roy, 1737

. . . . La disette des fourages a esté aussi grande que celle du blé, la mortalité sur les bestiaux s'en est ensuivie, nous estimons qu'il en a péri au moins la douzième partie dans le cours de l'hyver dernier, et pour entrer encore plus dans le détail les habitants n'ont pas eu les moyens faute de son, de pois et même de lait, d'élever la même quantité de porcs qu'ils sont en usage de faire et qui fournissent à la subsistence ordinaire et commune des habitants des villes, et des côtes.

Récolte. Il y avoit au commencement d'août de cetter année apparence d'une bonne récolte, elle est assez abondante dans le Gouvernement de Québec, mais elle est médiocre dans celui de Montréal où les brumes ont rouillé et échaudé les bleds dans plusieurs quartiers.

Answer to King's dispatch, 1737

The scarcity of forage has been as great as that of wheat; a general dying-off among the live stock has followed as a consequence. We calculate that at least one-twelfth of them perished during last winter, and, to go into more detail, the inhabitants have not had the means, for want of bran, peas, and even of milk, to raise the same number of pigs as usual, which pigs provide the ordinary and common subsistence of the inhabitants in town and country.

The Harvest. There was, at the beginning of August of this year, prospect of a good harvest; it is abundant enough in the District of Quebec, but it is poor in that of Montreal, where fogs have rusted and shrivelled the wheat in several parts.

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE FROM FRANCE

From Canadian Archives, CHIA, LXVII, 24-25

30 octobre 1737

Nous vous demandons, Monseigneur, d'envoyer l'année prochaine une flute de 600 tonneaux ou deux de 300 chargées de 7 à 8 mille quint'x de farines et de les faire partir assez tôt pour qu'elles puissent arriver dans le courant du mois de May ou au plus tard au commencement de Juin. Vous nous permettez, Monseigneur, de compter sur ce secours qui est indispensable. Il s'en faudra beaucoup qu'il suffise à remplir nos besoins: mais il les diminuera du moins et empêchera que nous ne tombions dans un estat dont la colonie ne se relèveroit de longtemps. Car nous le répétons, si vous n'avez agréable de nous procurer le secours que nous demandons, la plus grande partie de tout ce qui sera comestible se consommera. . .

(signed) HOCQUART.

October 20, 1737.

We request you, my lord, to send next year one boat of 600 tons or two of 300, loaded with seven or eight thousand quintals of flour, and to send them early enough for them to arrive during the month of May, or, at the latest, at the beginning of June. You must permit us, my lord, to count on this aid, which is indispensable. We can hardly expect it to be sufficient for our needs; but it will at least diminish them, and will prevent us from being reduced to a condition from which the colony would not recover for a long time. For, we repeat, if you are unwilling to procure for us the help we ask, the greatest part of everything edible will be consumed.

(signed) HOCQUART.

A PLAGUE OF CATERPILLARS

From Canadian Archives, CHIA, LXXX, 94-95

QUEBEC, 10 juillet 1743

Vous verrez que les chenilles commencent à faire bien du ravage dans le gouvernement de Montréal, j'apprens même qu'elles ont coupé tous les bleds du domaine du Roy

et celui des habitants au fort St. Frédéric, qu'elles ont fauché toutes les prairies les avoines et les blés d'Inde et qu'elles ont déjà entamé plusieurs pièces de blés en divers endroits du gouvernement de Montréal et de celui des Trois-Rivières; cependant, comme ces insectes à ce que l'on prétend ne vivent que peu de jours dans leur voracité, je crois qu'il y a lieu d'espérer qu'elles ne continueront pas longtemps dans leur progrès.

(signed) VARIN

You will see that caterpillars are beginning to do a great deal of damage in the district of Montreal. I even learn that they have cut down all the wheat on the King's estate, and that of the people of Fort St. Frederic, that they have mown down all the meadows, the oats, and the Indian corn, and that they have already started on the wheat in several places in the District of Montreal, and in that of Three Rivers; nevertheless as these insects, it is claimed, only live a few days in their greed, I think one may hope that their activities will not continue long.

(signed) VARIN.

A BAD HARVEST

From Canadian Archives, CHA, XCVIII, 86.

QUEBEC, May 1, 1752.

MONSEIGNEUR:

La récolte de l'année dernière a esté si mauvaise que j'ai bien eu de la peine à faire subsister Montréal et Québec.

Dès le commencement de Novembre cette première ville se trouva sans pain, les boulangers ne trouvoient point de bled à acheter dans les campagnes, quantités de paroisses de ce gouvernement ont esté en effet si maltraitées qu'elles n'en ont pas recueilli pour leur subsistence de 4: mois.

(signed) BIGOT.

MY LORD:

Last year's harvest was so bad that I had much difficulty in maintaining Quebec and Montreal.

From the beginning of November the former town was without bread, the bakers could buy no wheat in the country, many of the parishes in this district have been so badly treated indeed that they have received no aid for four months.

(signed) BIGOT.

MISERY ATTENDING DELAY OF PROVISIONS FROM FRANCE

QUEBEC 7, 7bre 1752.

La navire le Benjamin chargé de bled et de farine, de l'envoy du Sr. Grades de Bordeaux, est enfin arrivé icy depuis trois jours. Ce bâtiment avoit esté obligé de relâcher à Louisbourg par un voye d'eau considérable; son retardement a causé bien de la misère dans les 3 villes, dont les habitants étoient réduits depuis six semaines à un quarteron ou une demie livre de pain par jour. . .

(signed) BIGOT.

The ship Benjamin, loaded with wheat and flour, consigned by Sr. Grades of Bordeaux, arrived here at last, three days ago. The boat was obliged to cast anchor at Louisbourg on account of a serious leak; the delay caused much misery in the three towns whose inhabitants had been for six weeks reduced to a quarter or half a pound of bread a day.

(signed) BIGOT.

CROP FAILURE

From Canadian Archives, CHA, CII, 186

MONTREAL 12,7bre 1757.

. . . . Mais la colonie n'en sera pas moins dans la plus triste situation, la récolte ayant entièrement manqué, quoique faite et parfaite, les épis ne produisent presque rien, les pluies continuelles que nous avons eu ont brulé et rouillé nos grains, ce sont, Monseigneur, de ces événemens aux quels la prévoyance humaine ne scauroit remédier. . .

(signed) VAUDREUIL.

MONTREAL, September 12, 1757

But the colony is none the less in the most unfortunate situation, the crop having entirely failed. Although the threshing has been done over twice the ears produce almost nothing, as the continual rains that we have had have scalded and rusted our grain. These, my lord, are developments for which human foresight can find no remedy.

(signed) VAUDREUIL.

Later when settlement pushed its way into what is now the province of Ontario we have records of similar hardships when Upper Canada was in the pioneer stage. We read to-day of debt adjustment which is being made on a large scale on the prairies, but debt adjustment was not unknown even in the early days of Ontario.

"The Lanark Community which was established between the years 1820-1829 had received from the Canadian Government free land and from the British Government some £22,642, 10s. 6d. or about £10 a head. According to the Lanark Settlement Papers, these settlers petitioned His Excellency, Sir John Colbourne, K.C.B., Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada, that the British Government remit all claim to repayment.

The petitioners, after setting forth their difficulties and privations because of poor crops, then asked 'that Your Excellency will recommend to the present Government an abandonment of the debt in question, as from the uncertainty in which the petitioners are placed, numbers have already left the Settlement, others are preparing to do so, and even those who desire to remain are prevented from prosecuting improvements with the spirit that is essential to the prosperity of the place or conducive even to their own future comfort'." (1)

This petition was dated Lanark, August 5, 1832, and the debt was cancelled in full in the year 1836.

The farmers of the early days in Ontario had difficulties not unlike those of the farmers of the West for we read "Upper Canada suffered from midge, Hessian fly, and rust back to an early date and the census of 1851 estimated losses of wheat in Frontenac, Lennox and Addington, Hastings, and Prince Edward counties to be about 400,000 bushels. Lincoln, Welland and Haldimand also suffered severely. In 1862 a serious drought from early spring until nearly the end of June combined with the appearance of the grain aphid caused serious losses." (2)

The story of the early settlement of the Maritime Provinces as well as that of Upper and Lower Canada is one long tale of hardships and privations bravely endured. To help the pioneers, the Government from time to time assisted the early soldier settlements as well as the United Empire Loyalists. The program of public works particularly that relating to the construction of roads, bridges and canals, made it possible for men to earn some ready money while establishing themselves on the land.

In 1829, over one hundred years ago, because of the barren summer and of spring floods, the Hudson's Bay Company gave organized relief to the Red River district settlers.

In 1867 we read of the Red River Co-operative Relief Committee. In this year crops were destroyed by grasshopper plague, which continued into the year of 1868. The Relief Committee collected funds for relief purposes from England, United States and the Canadian Board of Works. In 1868 the Government of Canada commenced work on the road between the Red River settlement and the Lake of the Woods to give relief. Wages were paid at the rate of four pounds sterling per month and flour and pork were given instead of cash.

Before discussing the relief situation as it is found to-day on the western plains it should be kept in mind that Western Canada is not the only part of the Dominion which has been forced to look to the federal treasury for assistance since 1930. The statement published on the following page shows that Ontario heads the list with \$82,806,000, Quebec comes second with \$50,467,000, and Saskatchewan stands third with \$46,598,000.

(1) Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science, November, 1937.

(2) Select Documents in Canadian Economic History, 1783-1885, Innis and Lower.

TABLE I

The following composite statement sets forth disbursements by the Dominion, through the Department of Labour and the Department of Agriculture, to the end of the fiscal year 1937-38, for assistance provided under relief legislation since 1930.

The summary of loans to the western provinces and the C.P.R. outstanding as at the same date is: Manitoba \$22,285,146.47; Saskatchewan †\$48,350,137.46; Alberta \$26,079,198.00; British Columbia \$33,086,716.49; C.P.R. \$2,447,222.71; total, \$132,248,421.13.

DISBURSEMENTS BY THE DOMINION FOR ASSISTANCE PROVIDED UNDER RELIEF LEGISLATION 1930-37

Item	1930 Act	1931 Act	1932 Act	1933 Act	1934 Act	1935 Act	1936 Act	1937 Act	Total	Loans Written Down	Grand Total
	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000	\$000
Disbursements to Provinces—											
Prince Edward Island.....	95	129	25	99	147	287	291	126	1,199	—	1,199
Nova Scotia.....	834	1,070	580	1,261	574	1,295	1,110	601	7,325	—	7,325
New Brunswick.....	504	763	220	593	425	1,060	910	510	4,985	—	4,985
Quebec.....	3,292	5,437	4,253	8,297	6,346	7,593	10,825	6,788	52,742	—	52,742
Ontario.....	4,692	11,101	7,987	12,914	11,045	16,208	13,983	6,975	84,905	—	84,905
Manitoba.....	1,600	3,324	1,741	2,372	2,120	3,563	4,421	2,999	22,390	805	23,195
Saskatchewan.....	1,689	8,225	5,612	2,715	(1) 7,616	(2) 7,097	* 2,370	5,832	70,092	17,959	88,051
Alberta.....	1,281	3,038	1,300	1,572	1,468	1,781	* 947	2,154	17,348	—	17,348
British Columbia.....	1,376	3,940	3,228	3,448	2,301	2,283	3,502	2,454	22,532	—	22,532
Yukon and Northwest Territories.....	20	10	3	5	—	10	—	—	48	—	48
Disbursements through Dominion Government Departments.....	57	4,596	1,036	7,643	8,398	8,252	100	167	30,249	—	30,249
Other Disbursements—											
Board of Railway Commissioners.....	500	500	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,000	—	1,000
C.P.R.....	864	209	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,073	—	1,073
C.N.R.....	882	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	882	—	882
Administration expenses.....	43	85	68	87	89	140	179	227	918	—	918
Miscellaneous.....	—	—	—	—	—	21	9	8	38	—	38
	17,729	42,427	26,054	41,006	40,529	49,499	50,699	49,783	317,726	18,764	336,490

(1) Includes \$5,000,000 advanced to the province for relief in the drought area.

(2) Includes \$4,000,000 advanced to the province for relief in the drought area.

† Saskatchewan loan reduced by \$17,682,157.61—written down to non-active asset.

* Agriculture, Feed and Fodder.

** Agriculture, Direct Relief.

Section I

CHARACTERISTICS AND PROBLEMS OF THE PRAIRIE PROVINCES

In comparison with Eastern Canada, life in the Prairie Provinces must be regarded as in the pioneer stage of development. The West is still a young country. The first period of settlement occurred between the years 1876 and 1882 and was followed by years of hard struggle and many difficulties. A second period of settlement between 1896 and 1913 was the time of the greatest influx of settlers and immigrants and the population increased rapidly during these years. During the period of the War and the years following, the flow of settlers was reduced in number, but the extension of settlement still continued. A new period of expansion from 1926 to 1929 was curtailed by conditions resulting from the world depression and the onset of the drought.

The following figures show the comparatively recent growth of population in the Prairie Provinces.⁽¹⁾

TABLE II
POPULATION OF THE PRAIRIE PROVINCES 1871-1936

Year	Manitoba	Saskatchewan	Alberta	Total
1871.....	25,228	48,000		73,228
1881.....	62,260	56,446		118,706
1886.....	108,640			-
1891.....	152,506	98,967		251,473
1896.....	193,425			-
1901.....	255,211	91,279	73,022	419,512
1906.....	365,688	257,763	185,412	808,646
1911.....	461,394	492,432	374,295	1,328,121
1916.....	553,860	647,835	496,525	1,698,137
1921.....	610,118	757,510	588,454	1,956,082
1926.....	639,056	820,738	607,599	2,067,393
1931.....	700,139	921,785	731,605	2,353,529
1936.....	711,216	930,893	772,782	2,414,891

⁽¹⁾ W. A. Mackintosh, "Economic Problems of the Prairie Provinces" p. 281, Toronto MacMillans 1934, except figures for 1936, which are taken from Canada 1938, p. 33.

It will be seen that the population of the prairies since 1881 has increased 20·34 times.

Settlers in a new country are confronted with certain physical and economic factors to which they must adjust themselves or shape to their own ends in order that they may successfully gain a livelihood. They must develop an agricultural technique suited to the climate, soil, and topography of the country and the distance from markets. They have also to deal with more complicated economic factors, such as the cost of land and of transportation, the demand for their products, the cost of commodities which must be purchased and the cost of living generally. It takes time for settlers in a new country to adapt themselves to new conditions. Old methods do not always work. They have to learn by the usual method of mankind, that is, by trial and error.

PALLISER, HIND AND MACOUN

Before Western Canada was occupied there had been three reports made as to the suitability of the prairie country for settlement. In 1857 the British Government sent out Captain John Palliser to explore "the nature of the country and its capacity for agriculture." He reported unfavourably and described a huge area, since known as Palliser's triangle, as "arid plains." He spoke of the Great American Desert and stated that the western plains of

Canada were a continuation of this desert. As far as British territory was concerned the desert began with the forty-ninth parallel of latitude and extended eastward as far as about Brandon and westward to the Waterton lakes of Alberta. From this base the triangle ran northward, the two sides of the triangle meeting at latitude fifty-two at a point near where Saskatoon now stands. In his report he said: "This desert, although there are fertile spots throughout its extent, can never be of much advantage to us as a possession."

About the same time Mr. Henry Y. Hind, an English geologist residing in Toronto, was asked to go west by the Canadian Government to make a report on the nature of the soil and its suitability for agriculture. His report was largely in agreement with that of Palliser and may be summed up as follows: "A proper appreciation and use of facts will convince the most sanguine that the larger portion of this area is, in its present state, unfit for the permanent habitation of man, on account of climate, soil and lack of fuel."

Later in 1872 John Macoun was sent out by the Dominion Government to make further investigation and to ascertain the validity of the reports of Palliser and Hind. In 1877 John Macoun's report was published. His work had been done in an era of high rainfall and as a result he brought back an enthusiastic account of the land. He claimed that there were 200,000,000 acres suitable for agricultural settlement. The optimism created by this report was a factor in the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway and the opening up of Western Canada for settlement by the Dominion Government.

The settlement of Western Canada was rapid and without any comprehensive planning; settlers rushed to take advantage of the new country encouraged by the lure of free land and the prospect of quick and abundant crops. Lands unsuited for grain growing were put under cultivation and many found themselves trying to make a living from marginal or sub-marginal lands, with the result that these have become the first to be in need of assistance when drought and depression struck the prairies. During the War the demand for wheat increased greatly and the Dominion Government encouraged the western farmer to extend his production as greatly as possible.

THREE TYPES OF SOIL ZONES

A soil survey of Western Canada has revealed that there are three types of soil zones: the plains or prairie lands, the park areas, and the wooded areas. The plains are a vast open expanse of land for the most part treeless, except in certain spots where, due to moisture from creeks or coulees, there are clusters of small trees. Trees do not grow extensively on the prairie plains because on account of insufficient moisture the subsoil is too dry for their development. Trees require a goodly supply of moisture. Hundreds of thousands of trees have died on the prairie during the drought of the last eight years.

The park area is a wooded area on the outer rim of the plains area and has a greater rainfall. It is estimated that 60 per cent of the Prairie Provinces is made up of plains soil, 30 per cent of parks soil and 10 per cent of wooded soil.

Diversified farming can be carried on in the park area with a considerable degree of success but is not suited to areas in the plains region where there is a lack of moisture due to a low and uncertain rainfall, and to the absence of streams and rivers. The growing of wheat requires less moisture than any other type of crop. Mixed farming requires more water for stock and for pasture and this is not possible in any large way on the plains unless large stretches of country are set aside to be used as cattle ranges.

On the other hand, the dry weather of the prairie with the extreme heat in the summer is most favourable for the production of a superior quality of wheat and it is this factor that has given Canada the premier place in the markets of the world for high quality wheat. Favourable soil and climatic

conditions have led to a concentration on the growing of wheat as the great agricultural industry of Western Canada. It is not intended to suggest that wheat is the only crop produced. Mixed farming is carried on to some extent, and industries such as lumber, fishing, mineral production, oil and coal, and some manufacturing industries will be found in all three provinces. But the production of wheat holds the dominant place, particularly in Saskatchewan, and from the nature of the soil and climate in all probability will continue to be of paramount importance.

THE MIDDLE WEST LARGELY AN AGRICULTURAL ECONOMY

Of the 2,414,891 people who live in the three Prairie Provinces, about 20 per cent of them are to be found in the five larger cities, Winnipeg, Regina, Saskatoon, Edmonton and Calgary, and 80 per cent in the smaller rural towns and on the land and are thus closely associated with the agricultural industry. It is to be remembered, however, that practically the entire population of the Prairie Provinces is dependent on agriculture. The whole economic structure, the banks, the railways and the mercantile establishments are organized in relation to a predominantly agricultural economy. There has been a steady increase in the production of wheat in all three Prairie Provinces. In 1900, 23,456,985 bushels were produced; in 1928, the year of greatest production, the total was 544,598,000 bushels. For a period of twenty years 90 per cent of the Canadian wheat acreage has been in the Prairie Provinces.

In the pioneer days of the Eastern Provinces, when the depredations of the wheat midge and other insects made wheat growing too precarious to be depended upon, the early settlers were able to turn to diversified farming. The varied climate, the greater rainfall and more favourable geographic situation as to markets of the Eastern Provinces enabled the farmer of the East to adapt himself to a more secure form of farm production, thus avoiding the possibility of complete crop failure.

On the other hand, concentration on wheat has not given the western farmer the security which comes from more varied crop production. With him crop failure may mean a total loss on the year's operations. The prairie farmer has constantly to cope with conditions arising out of scarcity of moisture, a late spring and a short growing season. Hail may take his crop in July and frost in August. Plant diseases and insect pests, such as rust, grasshoppers, the army worm, have always been serious problems. The position of the western farmer, as the result of certain physical and economic factors, is, under the most favourable circumstances, an unusually precarious one. When he was faced by the combination of world depression and unprecedented drought conditions he found himself in a situation with which unaided he was unable to cope.

CAUSES OF CROP FAILURE

Drought, plant diseases, and insect pests are recurring conditions that make the production of wheat in Western Canada an agricultural enterprise surrounded with a high degree of risk, often resulting even in good years with complete crop failure in certain sections.

DROUGHT

The greatest single problem with which the prairie farmer has to contend is that of using to the best advantage a lower-than-average rainfall. His attention has necessarily been focussed upon developing drought-resistant crops and dry-farming methods.

The rainfall in regions throughout the world, where agriculture is carried on successfully, varies between 20 and 50 inches of rain annually. But in Manitoba the rainfall ranges from 20 to 22 inches in the most favoured sections, while in large sections of southern Saskatchewan and in the southeastern portion of Alberta there is frequently only 10 to 12 inches of rainfall.

In addition to this it must be noted that much moisture is lost through excessive evaporation as a result of the high temperatures of summer and strong winds due to the high altitude of the central plains. Any one year of unusually light rainfall will result in a poor crop. But a series of years of

DROUGHT REGION OF THE GREAT PLAINS



The Drouth Area of the North American Plains is by no means confined to the three Canadian Prairie Provinces, but extends south of the International Boundary Line and includes eight complete States of the United States, and part of eleven others comprising an area that extends from 1000 to 1,200 miles East and West and 1,500 to 1,700 miles North and South.

The normal precipitation throughout this area is relatively low and varies widely from year to year and period to period. Since the middle of the last century, three major drouth periods have occurred, including one in the '60's, one in the '90's and the drouth period since 1929.

below normal rainfall gradually reduces the subsoil moisture to such an extent that the annual rainfall is not sufficient to produce a crop and a condition of drought ensues.

The drought which has prevailed over the entire section of the southern Saskatchewan plains, extending westward into Alberta and eastward into Manitoba, is the most serious drought situation which has occurred since the great period of settlement, beginning in 1896, and since the virgin soil of the prairie, for long ages covered with grass, has been under cultivation. During these dry years the cultivated soil has suffered from continued lack of rain and has been exposed to the mercy of unusually high winds which sweep across the prairies with great frequency. What has since proved to be a prolonged drought period began in 1929 and has remained practically unbroken until the fall of 1937, causing crop failure on an unprecedented scale and laying waste the country over vast areas. It should be stated, however, that a fairly good crop was harvested in 1932 but sold at ruinous prices. The year 1933 gave promise of a good crop but grasshoppers played havoc with it. In 1935 the drought was partially broken, particularly in southwestern Saskatchewan, but the hopes of the farmers were blighted by rust in Saskatchewan and by heavy August frosts in Alberta. The year 1937 proved to be the most disastrous of all the drought years.

The drought area takes in the whole of southern Saskatchewan, extending in the form of an irregular triangle to a point north of Saskatoon. The base of this triangle extends across the Saskatchewan boundaries, eastward to Brandon and westward into Alberta. It is this triangular section of semi-arid land which is sometimes referred to as Palliser's triangle. It should be remembered, however, that Palliser had to think in terms of agriculture as he understood it. The plough of his day could not have broken up the tough prairie sod. The wheat which he knew required at least one month longer to reach maturity than the wheat of to-day and little was known of dry-farming methods. Extensive as the drought area has been in Canada, it is but part of the huge area of the central plains of the North American continent which has suffered from severe drought conditions since 1929. The drought area of the United States extends from a point in California 1,200 miles eastward into the state of Oklahoma and northward to the Canadian border, taking in large sections of the states of California, Oregon and Washington on the western side, of Oklahoma, Kansas, Nebraska, South and North Dakota on the eastern side and including the entire states of Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, Colorado, Idaho, Wyoming and Montana.

The conditions which have resulted from the lack of sufficient moisture in this vast area have been aggravated by frequent hot dry winds of high velocity, sweeping over the cultivated soil, causing terrific dust storms. These high winds prevail in spring and early summer, consuming moisture and burning crops. In the worst drought areas, indescribable scenes of desolation have taken the place of the golden fields of ripened grain, extending far away to the horizon, which in other and better days gave to the prairie the romantic name of "The Golden West." A study of weather conditions of the American continent made by Dr. Charles G. Abbott, of the Smithsonian Institute, has brought to light the fact that there have been two major drought periods during the nineteenth century, the first in 1837 to 1846 and a second from 1886 to 1894, with minor droughts of shorter duration in between. These two major droughts of the last century continued for periods of about nine years and there is reason to hope that the present drought, commencing in 1929, has about run its course and that the end is not far distant.

Lack of proper understanding of the drought cycle has led many to believe that some radical change has been taking place in the climate of the West and that this land will never produce wheat in large quantities again and that it should be abandoned as a grain growing country. Students of this problem

do not agree with this conclusion but hold the view that favourable weather conditions will yet prevail and that the fertile soil of the prairies will again produce in abundance. This question will be discussed further in Section VIII.

The following table gives the wheat production for the three Prairie Provinces since 1900. The peak was reached in 1928. The figures since 1929 reveal the losses through crop failures culminating with only 37 million bushels for Saskatchewan in 1937 as contrasted with 321,215,000 bushels in the same province in 1928.

TABLE III

AREA, YIELD AND PRODUCTION OF WHEAT IN SASKATCHEWAN AND IN THE THREE PRAIRIE PROVINCES, 1900-1937⁽¹⁾

Year	Area Acres	Average Yield Bush.	Total Production Bush.	Area Acres	Average Yield Bush.	Total Production Bush.
1900.....	487,170	8.8	4,306,091	2,495,474	9.4	23,456,985
1905.....	1,376,281	23.1	31,799,198	3,941,369	21.2	83,549,927
1906.....	2,117,484	—	—	5,062,493	—	—
1908.....	2,396,000	14.5	34,742,000	5,624,000	16.3	91,855,000
1909.....	3,685,000	23.1	85,197,000	6,878,000	21.4	147,482,000
1910.....	4,228,222	15.8	66,978,996	7,867,423	14.0	110,166,704
1911.....	5,255,914	20.8	109,323,000	9,990,461	20.9	208,697,000
1912.....	5,582,000	19.2	106,960,000	10,011,000	20.4	204,280,000
1913.....	5,720,000	21.3	121,559,000	10,036,000	20.9	209,262,000
1914.....	5,348,300	13.7	73,494,000	9,335,400	15.1	140,958,000
1915.....	8,929,260	25.1	224,312,000	13,867,715	26.0	360,187,000
1916.....	9,032,109	16.3	147,559,000	14,362,809	16.9	242,314,000
1917.....	8,273,250	14.3	117,921,300	13,619,410	15.6	211,953,100
1918.....	9,249,260	10.0	92,493,000	16,125,451	10.2	164,436,100
1919.....	10,587,363	8.5	89,994,000	17,750,167	9.3	165,544,300
1920.....	10,061,069	11.3	113,135,300	16,841,174	13.9	234,138,300
1921.....	13,556,708	13.8	188,000,000	22,181,329	12.6	280,098,000
1922.....	12,332,297	20.3	250,167,000	21,223,448	17.7	375,194,000
1923.....	12,791,000	21.3	271,622,000	20,879,558	21.7	452,260,000
1924.....	13,033,000	10.2	132,918,000	21,066,221	11.2	235,694,000
1925.....	15,508,962	18.8	235,472,000	19,759,648	18.6	367,058,000
1926.....	13,558,384	16.2	219,646,000	21,805,314	17.5	380,765,000
1927.....	12,979,279	19.5	252,500,300	21,425,656	21.2	454,559,300
1928.....	13,790,854	23.3	321,215,000	23,158,505	23.5	544,598,000
1929.....	14,445,286	11.1	160,565,000	24,297,116	11.6	281,664,000
1930.....	14,713,673	14.0	206,700,000	24,807,058	16.0	397,300,000
1931.....	15,026,185	8.8	132,466,000	25,586,092	11.8	301,181,000
1932.....	15,543,000	13.6	211,551,000	26,395,000	16.0	422,947,000
1933.....	14,743,000	8.7	128,004,000	25,177,000	10.4	263,004,000
1934.....	13,262,000	8.6	114,200,000	23,296,000	11.3	263,800,000
1935.....	13,206,000	10.8	142,198,000	23,293,000	11.3	264,096,000
1936.....	14,596,000	8.0	110,000,000	24,522,000	8.6	202,000,000
1937.....	13,893,000	2.7	37,000,000	24,599,000	6.7	159,000,000

(¹) A Submission by the Government of Saskatchewan to the Royal Commission on Dominion-Provincial Relations (Hereafter referred to as the Rowell Commission) King's Printer, Regina, 1937, p. 148.

GRASSHOPPERS

Grasshoppers, insects harassing man from ancient times, began to be more active in Saskatchewan in 1931. The continued dry warm weather of the drought period was most favourable to the spread of this pest. Damage of between one and two per cent for the crop in 1931 and 1932 increased to over 18 per cent in 1933 and it was recognized that the menace from grasshoppers in 1933 had reached the proportions of a plague. In the important central crop division of Saskatchewan, damage to wheat from grasshoppers was estimated to be as high as 40 per cent and to other cereal crops 80 per cent. In addition to this, gardens were entirely cut off, thus wiping out a very necessary source of food supply for the farmer and his family.

Under the leadership of the Department of Agriculture the western farmer is learning how to cope with the problem of the grasshopper. Areas of infestation can be located and by the use of proper methods, such as fall tillage and poison, damage can be reduced substantially. In 1934, when two-thirds of the province was infested, such measures saved millions of bushels of wheat.

RUST

Plant diseases constitute another major problem of the prairie farmer. Of these, wheat stem rust is the most destructive. In 1936, due to favourable weather conditions, rust destroyed the wheat in the large areas where the best crops were anticipated, chiefly in southwestern Saskatchewan and in Manitoba.

Rust is caused by a parasite blown by wind from the wheat areas of the United States. Favourable weather conditions are the deciding factor in the widespread development of rust in any one year. Damp warm weather in early summer favours the germination of the rust spore and the extent of the spread of the disease into Canada is determined by the direction of the prevailing winds during the growing season. A year of greater rainfall, while more favourable to a good crop, is the year when damage from rust can be most severe. It has been estimated that in 1935 Saskatchewan lost 56,571,000 bushels of wheat from rust and that Manitoba lost 30,674,000 bushels, representing a total value of \$55,415,000.

Very extensive research work, with the idea of developing a rust-resistant wheat, has been carried on for some years. The efforts of the scientists have been successful. Wheat that can withstand the onslaught of the rust spores has been developed, and another menace to wheat growing is being brought under control.

REDUCED INCOME OF FARMER DUE TO FINANCIAL DEPRESSION AND CROP FAILURE

Side by side with the failure of crops came the slump in wheat prices due to world-wide financial depression. The estimated average prices for wheat at the local elevator for eight years prior to 1930 were as follows:—

1922 \$.85	1926 \$1.08
1923 .65	1927 .97
1924 1.21	1928 .77
1925 1.25	1929 1.03

The average price for the eight-year period was 98 cents per bushel. But with the fall in prices resulting from the economic depression, the estimated average prices for wheat at the local elevator for the succeeding eight years were as follows:—

1930 \$.47	1934 \$.61
1931 .38	1935 .60
1932 .35	1936 .88
1933 .47	1937 1.04

The average price for this eight-year period was 60 cents per bushel.

In fact, "on December 16, 1932, wheat prices fell to 34 cents for No. 1 Northern at the local elevator and for lower grades of wheat only 25 cents per bushel was received by the farmer. This was the lowest price in 300 years as far as commercial trading in wheat is concerned."¹

¹ W. A. Mackintosh, "Economic Problems of the Prairie Provinces" p. 188.

In the 16-year period under review, from 1922 to 1937 inclusive, we find that for the first part of the period, 1922 to 1929 inclusive, the estimated values of the wheat actually sold off the farms of Saskatchewan were as follows:—

1922.....	\$172,718,000
1923.....	156,966,000
1924.....	149,376,000
1925.....	285,271,000
1926.....	220,781,000
1927.....	221,537,000
1928.....	217,927,000
1929.....	134,932,000

or a grand total of..... \$1,559,508,000¹

The results for the second half of the period from 1930 to 1937 inclusive, owing partly to crop failures and partly to reduced prices, were as follows:—

1930.....	\$ 72,293,000
1931.....	44,407,000
1932.....	56,889,000
1933.....	52,301,000
1934.....	57,950,000
1935.....	68,400,000
1936.....	81,000,000
1937.....	16,000,000

or a grand total of..... \$449,240,000²

¹ and ² Figures supplied by the Secretary of Statistics, Department of Agriculture, Regina.

These figures show that the loss in the wheat income of the Saskatchewan farmers for the last eight years was \$1,110,268,000, as compared with their income from the previous eight years. When it is remembered that the income from wheat represents at least 80 per cent of the cash income of the Saskatchewan farmer who lives in the great-plains area we can understand the plight of of the farmer during these years. One must add to this the fact that the price of "street" wheat, No. 1 Northern at country points, with a 25 cents freight rate, had an index of 34 in December, 1932, as compared with an index number of 100 in 1914. Commodities and equipment required for farm purposes had an index of 132 or 32 per cent above the 1914 level. Thus it required at least four bushels of No. 1 Northern wheat to sustain the same purchasing power that one bushel of wheat had at the outbreak of the war.¹

It must be remembered also that such widespread and prolonged drought accompanied by a financial depression almost unprecedented in economic history was entirely unexpected by farmers whose agricultural experience was almost wholly confined to the present century. Provision for reserves for continued drought was not considered necessary and none was made.

Map No. 2 gives the approximate average yields of wheat for the year 1937 for the province of Saskatchewan. Some 37,000,000 bushels were produced from 13,893,000 acres sown to crop, an average of 2.7 bushels per acre. This is the lowest total yield of wheat for the province of Saskatchewan since 1908 in which year 34,742,000 bushels were produced from 2,396,000 acres sown.

The Bank of Canada report on the financial position of Saskatchewan sums up the situation admirably.²

"The small secondary industries, the construction industry, and the retailing, distributing and servicing trades, collapsed when the net incomes from

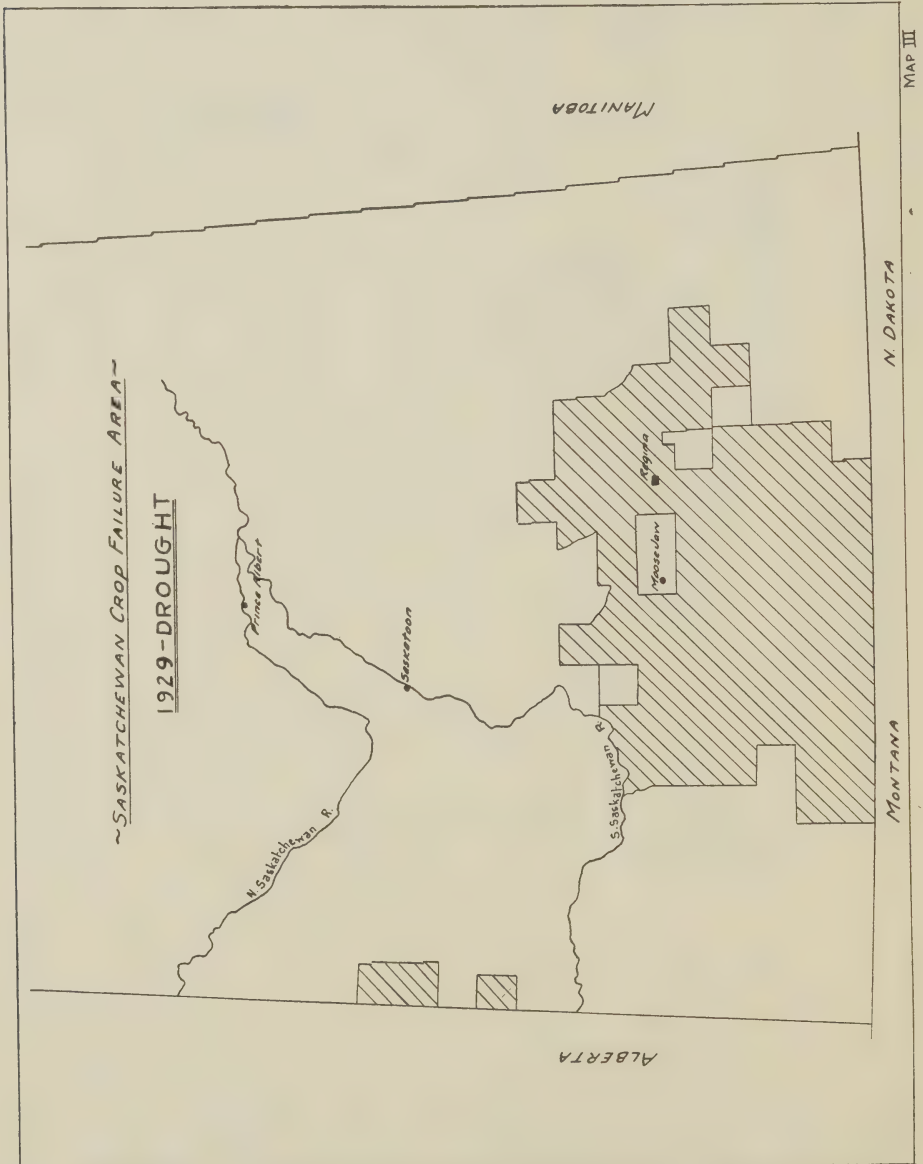
¹ W. A. Mackintosh, "Economic Problems of the Prairie Provinces" p. 189.

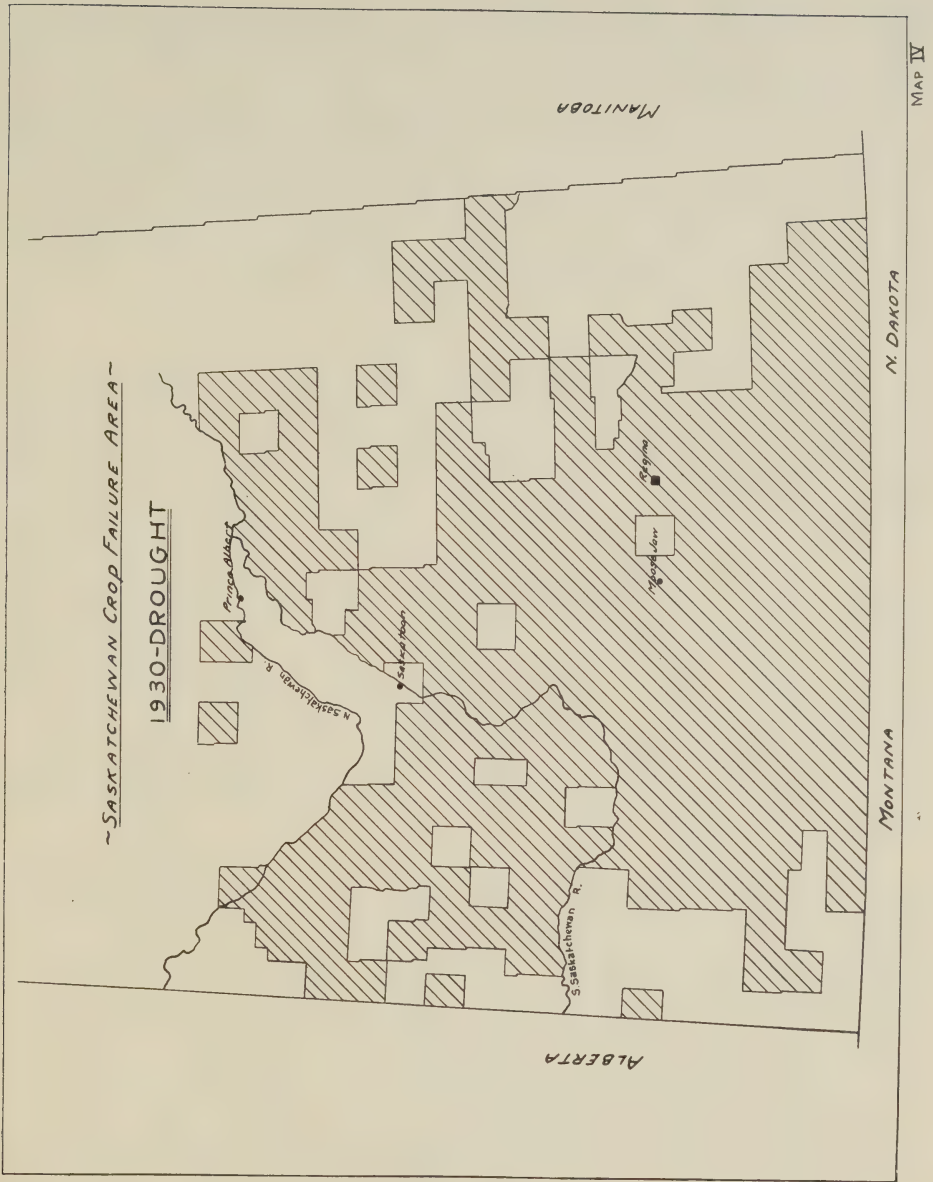
² Bank of Canada Report 1937, p. 10 and 11.

Section II

THE NEED IN SASKATCHEWAN AND THE NATION'S RESPONSE

In times of great national emergencies like that which exists in the West to-day the first thought of the governing body is for the people most severely affected. In the early stages of the drought, the municipality, following the traditional method, attempted to take care of the needs of the people within its borders. But it was soon found that the burden was too great for the municipi-





pality to bear alone and gradually the provinces assumed part of the responsibility and later the Dominion Government came to the assistance of the provinces.

The Saskatchewan wheat crop of 1929 was disappointing, being a total of 160,565,000 bushels for the province as compared with 321,215,000 bushels of the previous year. About 150,000 people living in central and southern Saskatchewan had to face the situation of almost total crop failure because of lack of rain (Map III). At the time this occurred no one thought seriously of drought, especially of a continued drought. It was just looked upon as unfortunate that an unusually large area was suffering from a dry year. Unfortunately, however, this condition was repeated in 1930 (Map IV). Steps were

immediately taken by the municipalities and provincial governments to meet the situation. Thousands of people required direct relief (food, clothing, fuel, etc.). Seed, feed, fodder, tractor fuel, repairs to farm implements, binder twine also had to be provided.

In the fall of 1929 the provincial government began a program of road work as a relief measure, confined to the farmers who were in need. With the assistance of grants-in-aid from the federal Government about \$4,000,000 was spent in this way during 1929, 1930 and 1931. The money was used largely to construct colonization roads and secondary highways. This was in addition to large expenditures which were made during these years by the provincial Government in gravelling certain main highways of the province.

THE SASKATCHEWAN RELIEF COMMISSION

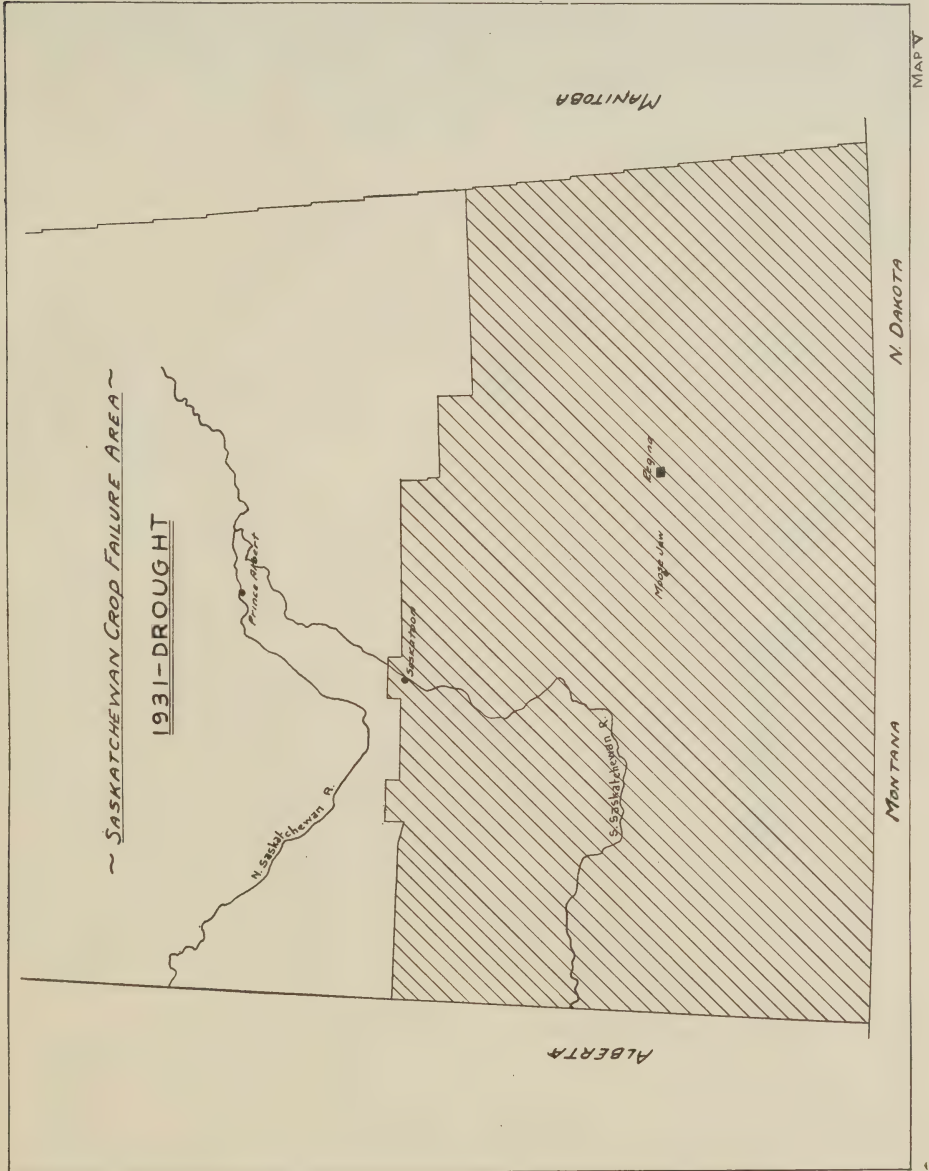
When it was seen that, because of the crop failure in 1931 (Map V), a relief situation of the first magnitude must be faced, the provincial government, by Order in Council, brought into being the Saskatchewan Relief Commission. This commission, of which Mr. Henry Black was chairman, consisted of five members, whose positions were honorary, along with a general manager who was the responsible executive officer. The commission worked through its own relief officers, who covered the province assisted by local relief committees.

Each applicant for direct relief filled out a form of application which was approved by the local relief officer and by the local relief committee. The application was then forwarded to the head office of the commission for final approval by a board, consisting of members of the staff of the commission. The distributions made by the commission might be divided into two main categories, direct relief and agricultural rehabilitation. Advances were all made to the individual on an undertaking to repay, secured by a promissory note from the individual. There were two distinct classes of undertakings taken—a straight note for direct relief advances, and a lien, which acted as a legal charge upon the crop of the individual as security for farm financing, classified as seeding operations.

In distributing relief in the second year of its operations the commission decided to discontinue the use of relief officers wherever possible and to bring the municipal councils into the field administration. The municipalities were, therefore, used as the field distributing agency, under the direction of field supervisors responsible directly to the commission and the same procedure was followed in the program of 1933-34. Upon requisitions duly approved by the municipal councils the relief orders were issued by the commission, the amounts of which were listed and sent to the respective municipalities who kept the record of the individual detailed accounts and the total amount charged to the municipality was kept in records by the commission. Relief orders were limited to a certain specified list of foodstuffs and also clothing which could be purchased by these orders. Orders for flour were issued separately and a specified brand of flour was stipulated. This system, however, was changed when the commission was abolished and the relief work transferred to the Relief Branch under the Department of Municipal Affairs. Flour orders after that were no longer issued nor was there a specified list of foodstuffs and clothing. Relief recipients were given orders up to a certain amount but were permitted to spend the orders for such food and clothing as they might choose.

While in the main the municipalities were unable to contribute any portion of the relief distributed, they entered into a relief agreement to reimburse the commission for a specified percentage of the total direct relief advances made to their respective residents in 1932-33 varying from 20 to 50 per cent, the percentage in the majority of cases being 20 per cent, while in 1933-34 the percentage was practically all 33½ per cent.

It should be noted that the municipalities did not contribute in respect of expenditures in either year under the heading of seed and seeding operations, the whole expenditures for this purpose being borne by the provincial Government. The municipalities, however, did assume responsibility by way of a guarantee for any unpaid advances made for the distribution of binder twine and binder repairs in the fall of 1932.

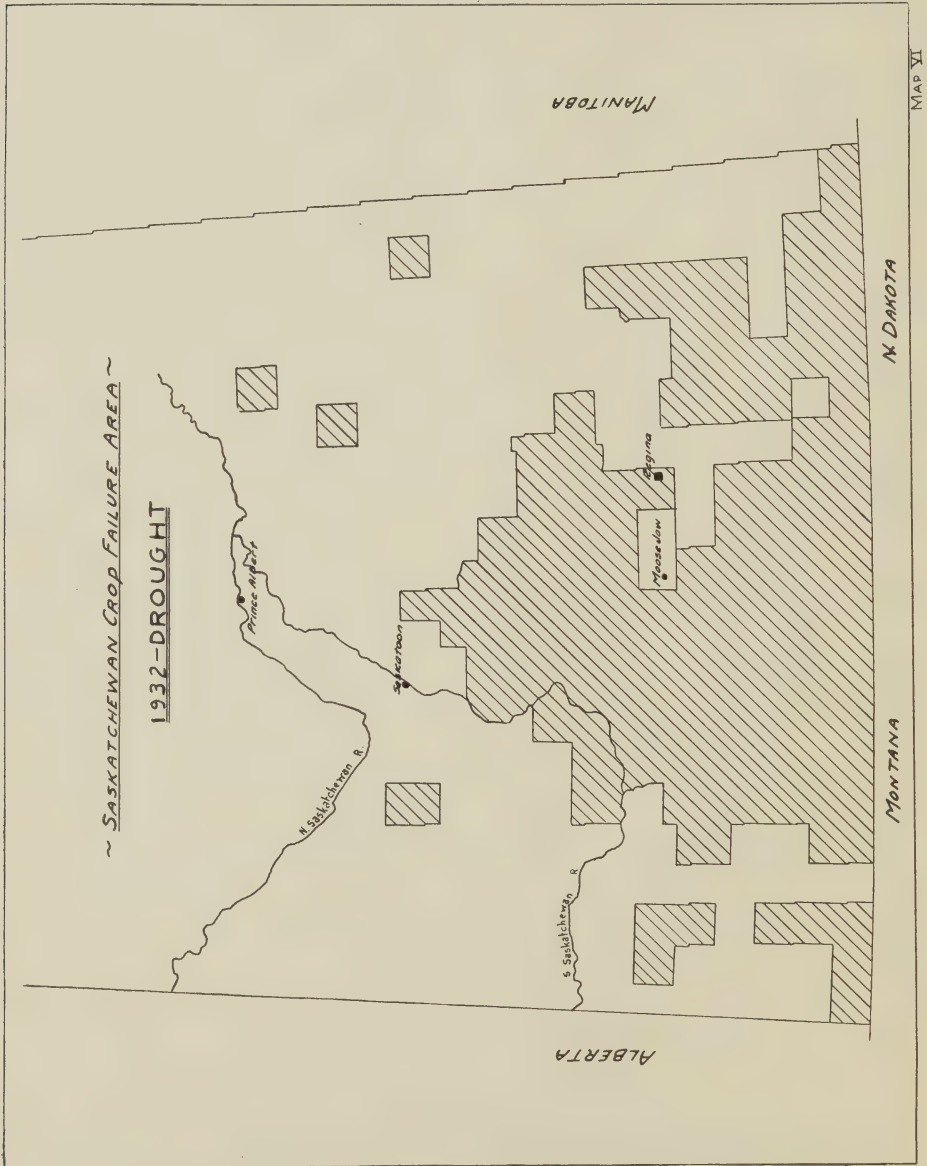


THE DOMINION GOVERNMENT SHARES IN THE RESPONSIBILITY

For years the Dominion Government has recognized its responsibility in the West and in 1908 made seed grain advances to the value of \$892,517.87 and in 1914-1915 also advanced \$8,655,698.41 to Saskatchewan for seed grain, fodder

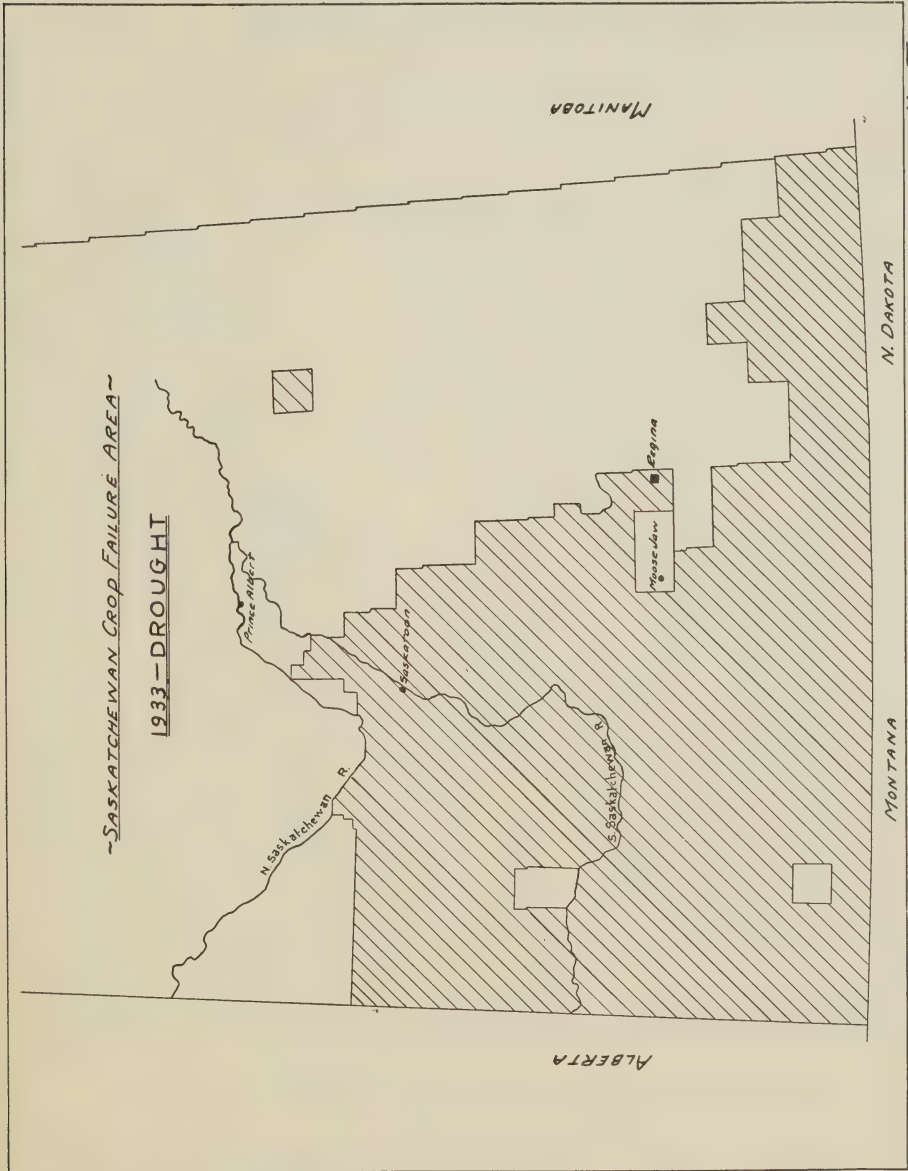
and relief. Because of the partial crop failure of 1931 and the poor prices prevailing, the Federal Government spent between 12 and 13 millions in the form of a bonus of five cents per bushel on the wheat grown by the individual farmer. In addition, the Dominion Government contributed \$10,000,000 for direct relief and agricultural aid.

Under the commission the dried-out area of Saskatchewan was divided into three zones, "A," "B" and "C." The "A" area consisted of some 93 rural municipalities and local improvements districts which had suffered three successive crop failures. The "B" area consisted of some 73 rural municipalities which had suffered from two successive crop failures and the "C" area



was composed of some 69 municipal units which had lost but one crop. This method of zoning the province was followed by the commission during the three years it was in control.

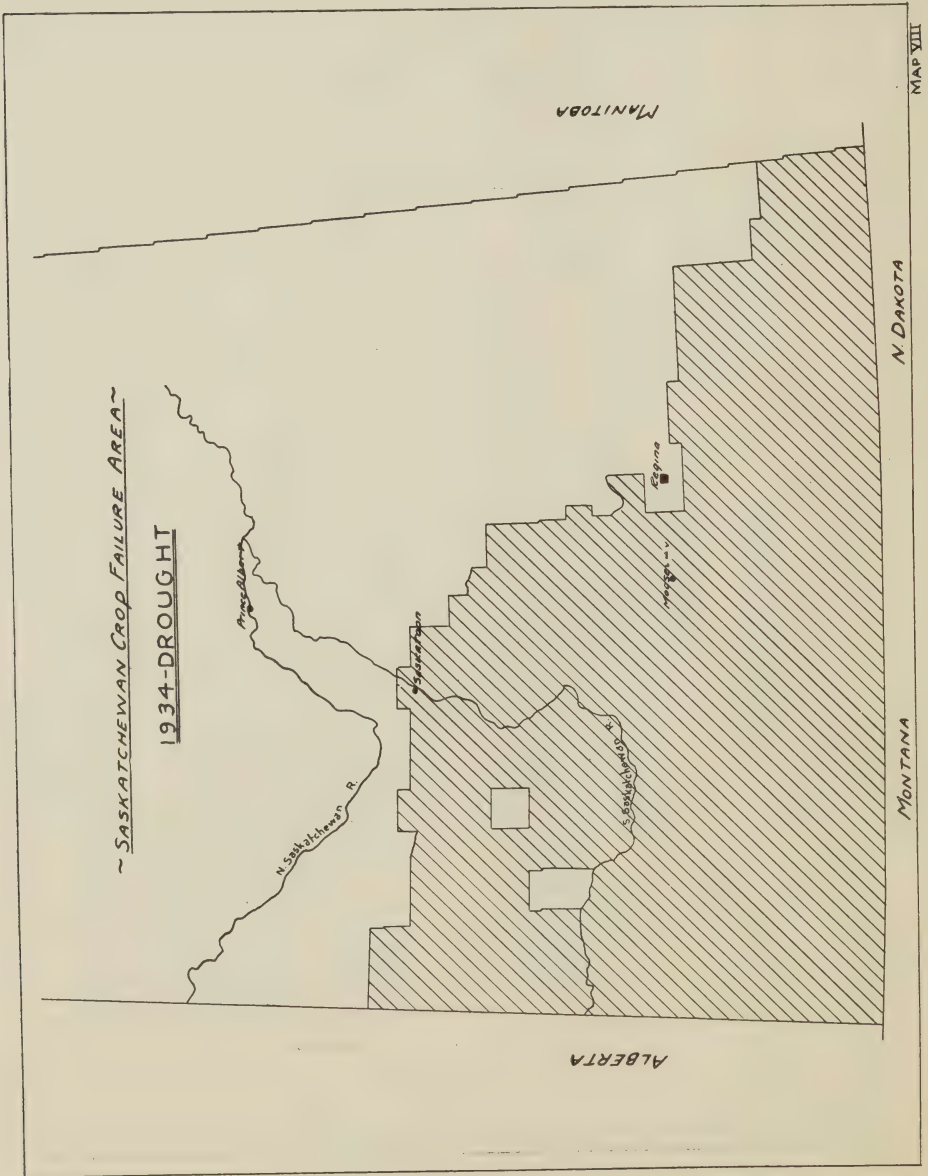
Because of the seriousness of the situation and of the inability of the province and municipalities to meet the huge expense involved, the Dominion Government agreed to pay the entire cost of the relief expenditures of the commission for direct relief, feed, fodder, and grazing dues in the "A" area for the year 1931-32. This applied also to those in the "A" area who might have moved out to other parts of the province. The federal Government also undertook to pay 50 per cent of the direct relief costs in the "B" area and 50 per cent of the costs for the movement of settlers' effects and live stock from



the "A" and "B" areas. As churches and other organizations in other parts of Canada arranged to send foodstuffs and other commodities into the "A" area, the federal Government also agreed to pay one-half of the freight charges on the same. The Dominion Government also expended \$84,886 for medical relief in the "A" and "B" areas.

The expenses of the relief commission for the first year of its operation amounted to \$18,740,672, of which \$9,870,916 was assumed by the Dominion Government and \$8,869,756 by the province.

A fair crop was harvested in 1932 but owing to ruinous prices relief was again necessary. (Map VI.) The total cost in Saskatchewan was \$3,287,665 of which \$713,405 was cared for by the Dominion Government.

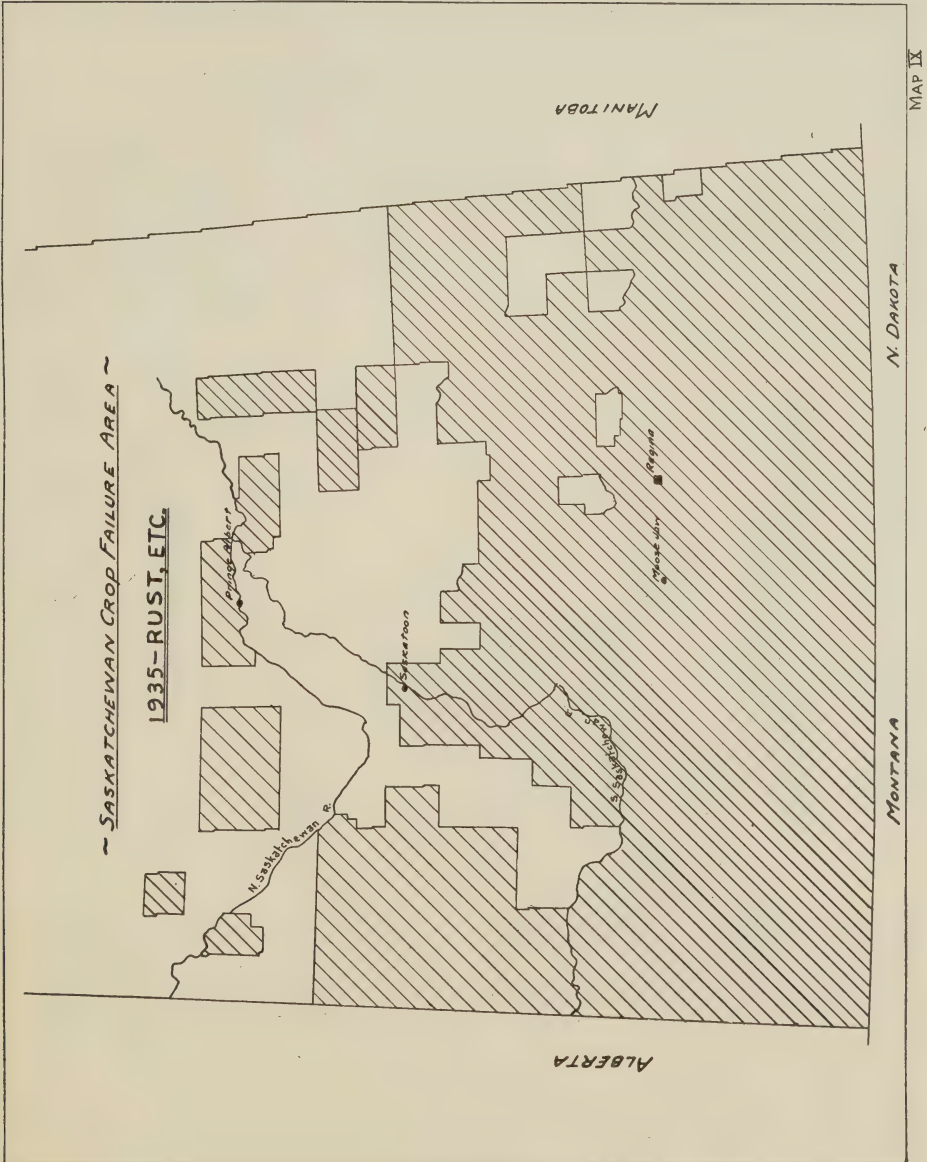


In 1933 there was another poor crop with low prices (Map VII), (47 cents per bushel on the farm) and during the winter of 1933-34 it was found that nearly half of the agricultural population were in need of relief. The Dominion Government came to their aid to the extent of \$2,064,482.

In 1934 the crop reached a new low of 114,200,000 bushels of wheat (Map VIII) with low prices still prevailing and the Dominion Government again came to the aid of the province to the extent of \$8,653,277.93.

The commission continued to administer relief until the summer of 1934.

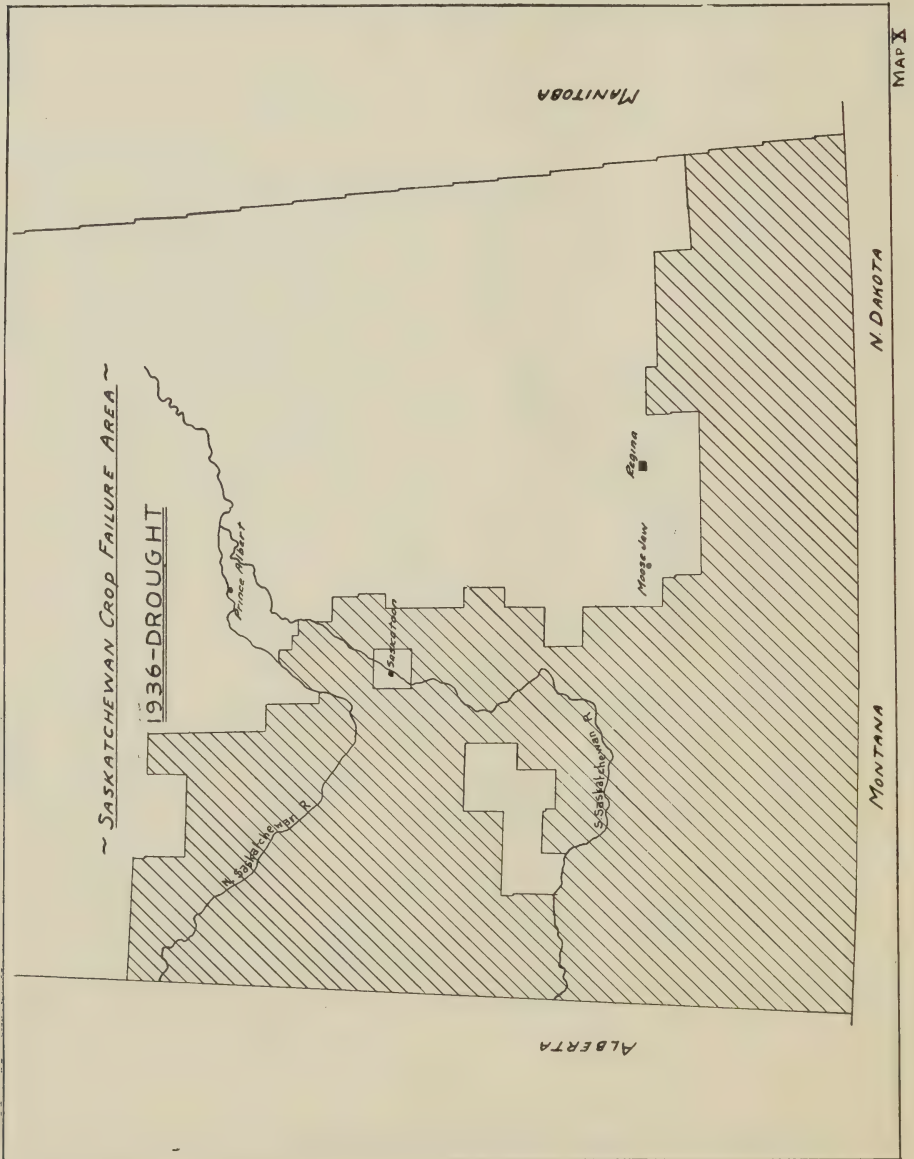
A change of government having taken place, the commission was relieved of its duties and relief assistance was divided between the Department of Municipal Affairs and the Department of Agriculture. The Bureau of Labour



and Public Welfare, in the Department of Municipal Affairs, was assigned the responsibility of direct relief and to the Department of Agriculture was given the work of agricultural re-establishment.

A break came in 1935 with every prospect of a good crop over the drought area excepting on the Alberta border. Unfortunately, however, rust attacked the southwestern section of the province and the total yield was only 142,198,000 bushels of wheat. (Map IX.)

However, because of improved conditions caused by good gardens and feed for live stock over most of the southern relief areas, it was not necessary for the Dominion Government to make any direct contribution for rural relief in this year, the province and the rural municipalities carrying the burden themselves.



The year 1936 was one of great disappointment. The drought area for this year could be defined by a line from a point south of Morden on the international boundary drawn in a northwesterly direction to Lloydminster on the Alberta-Saskatchewan boundary, then westward and southward to Cochrane, west of Calgary and then south to the international boundary. (Map X.) About 300 municipalities were affected—never before had so serious a situation faced the West. The Dominion Government, recognizing it as a national emergency, agreed to bear the entire cost of direct relief and winter maintenance for live stock from September 1, 1936, to March 31, 1937, in some 149 rural municipalities and local improvement districts. The total cost for Saskatchewan for the year 1936-37 was \$18,906,786 of which \$10,297,241.41 was cared for by the Dominion Government.

The spring of 1937 seemed propitious and up until the first of June there seemed to be a chance of a fair crop but rains needed in June and July did not materialize and the drought extended more widely than ever before. (See Map No. 2, page 27.) Manitoba was highly favoured and reaped a good harvest but the rain seemed to stop at the Saskatchewan boundary and almost the entire cultivated area of the province was completely dried out. The drought also extended westward and northward into Alberta.

The situation was so serious that the Dominion Minister of Agriculture, the Hon. J. G. Gardiner, accompanied by the Dominion Minister of Labour, the Hon. Norman McL. Rogers, made a survey of the vast drought-affected areas in August. They covered some 2,500 miles and in consultation with provincial and municipal authorities decided that 52 municipalities in Alberta and 170 rural municipalities and local improvement districts in Saskatchewan should become the special care of the Dominion Government. The towns and villages in these areas were also included. (Map No. II.)

The federal Government is bearing the entire cost in these areas for direct relief and for feed and fodder from September 1, 1937, to March 31, 1938. Further provision will be made by the Dominion Government until harvest.

In addition to this, the Dominion Government has granted \$1,000,000 to Saskatchewan and \$100,000 to Alberta to assist these provinces to take care of the needs of those municipalities outside of the Federal Drought Areas. In Saskatchewan the provincial Government is financially assisting 150 rural municipalities, 28 towns and 96 villages, and also administering relief to the 62 local improvement districts of the north, as well as to transients.

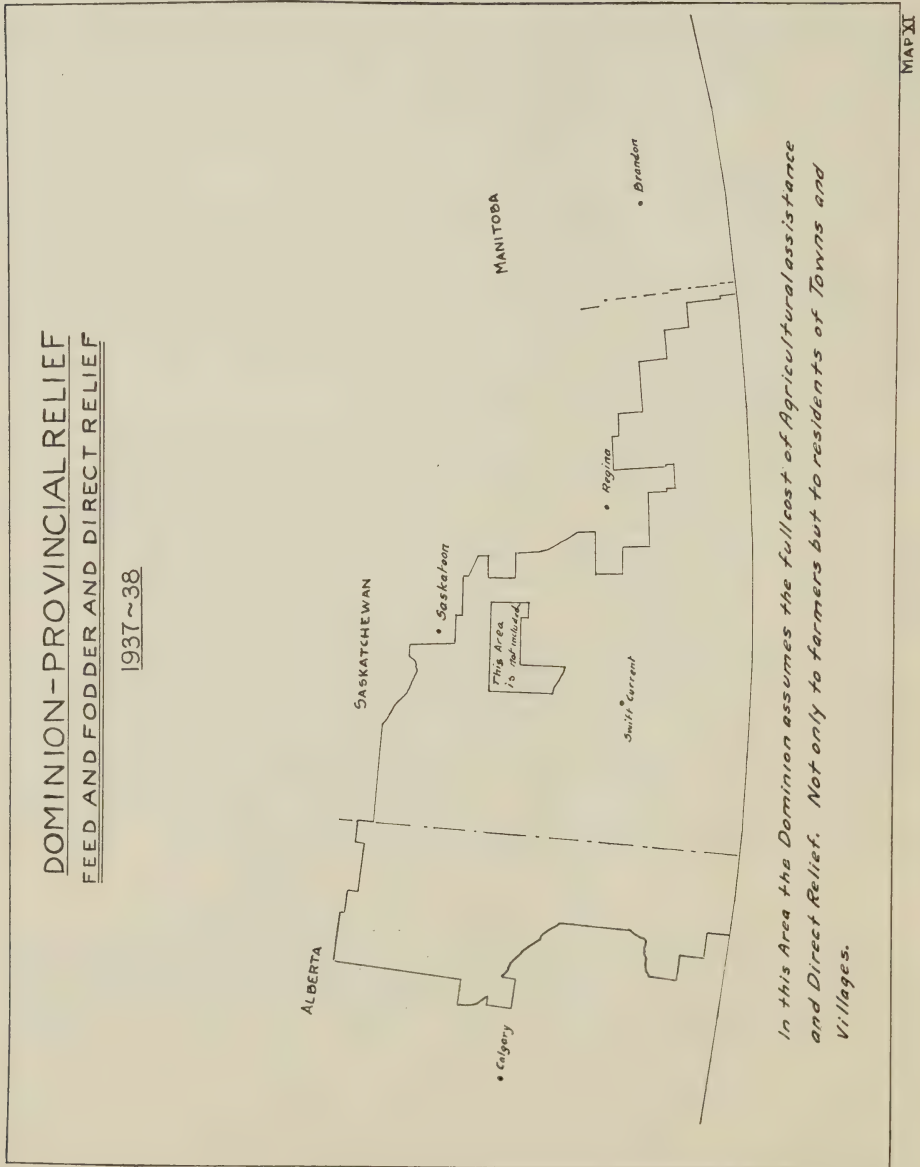
The provincial Government also purchased 550 cars of potatoes which were distributed free throughout the municipalities. The provincial Government receives a grant-in-aid of some \$230,000 per month from the federal Government to assist in the relief expenditures, both rural and urban, outside the federal area, or about 28 per cent of the money required. It is estimated that the provincial Government will have to spend over \$5,500,000 on relief outside the federal area for the year 1937-38. This covers both rural and urban expenditures but does not include seed grain and seeding supplies.

PRESENT RELIEF ORGANIZATION

In order to have a clear understanding of the methods of relief administration, as followed in the province of Saskatchewan, it is necessary to realize that three distinct units of government are involved, namely, the federal and provincial Governments and the municipal councils. All three have assumed financial responsibilities, the major portion, however, being borne by the federal and provincial Governments. It is, therefore, most vital that the federal and provincial governments carefully guard relief expenditures. The provincial government, too, is responsible for the entire cost of administering the relief. For this purpose the province is divided into seven areas or districts, each composed of about 50 municipalities. A supervisor representing the Department of

Agriculture is in charge of each district and under him may be some ten inspectors, varying according to the population of the area involved. The supervisor and his inspectors keep in close touch with each municipality or local improvement district.

The provincial Government in dealing with the individual municipality follows the principle that the responsibility for the administration of relief shall rest upon the reeve and councillors. These men are the elected representatives of the people. They are known by the people and they know the people, and should know intimately the needs of their municipality. The applications for both direct relief and agricultural aid are made out by the individual farmer



and delivered to the secretary-treasurer of the municipality. A committee, consisting of not less than three members of the municipal council, carefully examines all applications. The supervisor of the district, or one of his inspectors, sits in with the committee to advise as to the interpretation of the instructions regarding relief and to assist the committee, or the council as a whole, in seeing that relief is properly administered. It is also the duty of the supervisor or inspector to investigate any complaints which may come in, either complaints from relief recipients who feel that they are not being given their full quota, or from others who may report that certain men are receiving relief when such relief is not necessary.

The task which the supervisors are called upon to perform is an important and delicate one, and requires men of high calibre. All but one of these supervisors are graduates in agriculture of the University of Saskatchewan. They are all thoroughly trained men. Five of the seven men have been in the employ of the provincial Government for more than ten years, one was appointed during the regime of the previous government and one was appointed since the present government came into power. The inspectors under the direction of these supervisors are capable men who are familiar with agricultural conditions and with the needs of the farmers. The public have a right to know that these men are discharging their duties faithfully and intelligently.

In order to assist the inspectors in the northern areas in their duties a short course was given early in March, 1938, by the Department of Agriculture of the University of Saskatchewan, under the direction of Dean L. E. Kirk. The object of the course was to give to the inspectors the latest information as to farm management, forage crop production, weeds and their control, live stock feeding and breeding, dairy cattle, hogs, gardening, all with special reference to conditions in the north. The University is thus co-operating with the Government to make it possible for these men to serve the farmers in the largest possible way. These men are much more than simply relief inspectors. They are friends of the farmers, seeking to assist the farmers in meeting local conditions. It might be well if such a course were made available to all inspectors engaged in the work of rural relief and rehabilitation.

The writer of this report has come to the conclusion that the present system of relief administration in the rural areas provides the most equitable and economic procedure which has yet been devised. It extends to the rural areas the policy in use all over Canada for the past eight years in urban centres, in that it places the responsibility on the municipal councils. No doubt there are individual cases of abuse of relief privileges. When such come to light they are immediately investigated and dealt with accordingly. The Department of Municipal Affairs, or of Agriculture, usually has a man on the spot within 48 hours after a complaint has been received. The attitude generally, both of the departments involved and also of the municipal councils, is one of sympathy for those in need, but also a desire to see that only those receive relief who are in actual want.

The maximum food schedule for rural relief in Saskatchewan, according to instructions issued on September 1, 1937, provided relief orders to the value of \$20.25 per month for a family of five persons. If the applicant has no potatoes he is supplied in addition to the above quota. If the applicant has meat, 15 per cent is deducted from the quota, dairy products 10 per cent, vegetables 10 per cent.

Fuel allowances are made according to actual need.

The maximum relief quota for clothing for a family of five persons is \$53 for a year.

It can scarcely be claimed that the above quotas are too generous. While the total costs of relief reach staggering figures, the principle is everywhere accepted to-day that provision must be made for those in need. On the following pages are tables IV, V, VI showing the number of persons on direct relief

in the rural areas of Saskatchewan for the years 1931-1937, and also the expenditures on rural relief from September 1, 1931, to August 31, 1937, and the total costs for both rural and urban relief in Saskatchewan from September 1, 1929, to December 31, 1937.

TABLE IV

SASKATCHEWAN RELIEF COMMISSION—RELIEF DISTRIBUTION SEPT. 1, 1931 TO AUG. 31, 1934

	Relief Years		
	1931-32	1932-33	1933-34
Direct Relief—			
Heads of families.....	59,882	32,076	49,607
Dependents.....	268,123	114,334	168,157
Total assisted.....	328,005	146,410	217,764
Seed and Seeding—			
Seed applicants.....	46,997	16,887	38,501
Petroleum products applicants.....	11,020	3,770	11,231
Binder twine and repairs.....	28,671	Nil	Nil
Blacksmith's repairs.....	5,300	Nil	Nil
Hardware and machine repairs.....	7,198	Nil	16,510
Single Homeless—			
Farm labour plan.....	Nil	6,958	9,669

DEPARTMENT OF MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS—RELIEF BRANCH

	Dec. 1934 Total Persons	Dec. 1935 Total Persons	Dec. 1936 Total Persons	Dec. 1937 Total Persons
URBAN MUNICIPALITIES—				
Cities.....	8			
Towns.....	41			
Villages.....	155			
	204	207	226	349
	38,021	34,821	39,441	45,050
RURAL MUNICIPALITIES.....	179	231	228	290
	153,252	109,739	153,604	325,000
LOCAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS.....	20	20	20	20
	7,883	4,540	9,337	9,510
TRANSIENT FAMILIES.....	2,935	3,809	5,034	—
(Single, homeless, etc.)				
FARM LABOUR RELIEF SCHEME.....	5,492	6,371	27,898	26,126
NORTHERN AREA.....	26,618	23,015	27,810	20,400
RELIEF SETTLEMENT PLAN.....	4,016	—	—	—
MISCELLANEOUS.....	—	1,350	978	—
(Annexes—Mis. Rural).				
	238,217	183,645	264,102	426,086

TABLE V

GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES ON RURAL RELIEF IN SASKATCHEWAN FROM SEPTEMBER 1, 1931
TO AUGUST 31, 1937⁽¹⁾

—	1931-2	1932-3	1933-4	1934-5	1935-6	1936-7
Direct relief—	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Food.....	2,797,919	999,235	2,935,014	3,603,538	2,039,753	4,914,799
Fuel.....	1,538,239	695,384	1,248,623	1,521,718	1,054,421	1,630,090
Clothing.....	978,133	306,122	754,721	855,491	553,692	1,130,780
Medical aids.....	91,053	20,264	124,471	192,972	264,537	358,471
Coal for schools.....	—	11,431	38,409	—	34,060	90,820
Sundry.....	22,472	2,217	361,062	1,010,664	755,152	964,470
Total direct relief.....	5,427,816	2,034,653	5,462,300	7,184,383	4,701,615	9,089,430
Agricultural aid—						
Seed and seeding operations.....	5,318,271	735,152	3,734,802	6,565,748	3,346,747	4,092,428
Feed and fodder.....	5,094,716	519,860	2,984,970	5,917,598	159,004	5,118,554
Freight on feed and fodder.....	1,682,393	—	837,058	1,363,786	122,743	492,193
Freight, miscellaneous.....	302,175	—	36,650	163,780	—	64,911
Grazing fees.....	117,273	—	—	19,313	—	3,270
Binder-twine.....	798,028	—	—	32,177	171,589	—
Grasshopper bait.....	—	—	450,712	50,725	5,223	46,000
Total agricultural aid.....	13,312,856	1,255,012	8,044,192	14,113,127	3,805,306	9,817,356
Total relief.....	18,740,672	3,289,665	13,506,492	21,297,510	8,506,921	18,906,786

(¹) Saskatchewan Brief to the Rowell Commission p. 184.

As the need for relief in the drought areas arose through crop failure rather than through unemployment, the responsibility for relief in the federal drought areas of Saskatchewan and Alberta was transferred from the Dominion Department of Labour to the Dominion Department of Agriculture in 1937.

On the following pages are shown tables VI and VII. These tables show the Dominion assistance to Saskatchewan and Alberta in respect of relief contributions and estimated disbursements as at the close of the fiscal year 1937-38.

TABLE VI

DOMINION ASSISTANCE TO SASKATCHEWAN IN RESPECT OF RELIEF FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 1937-38

Direct Relief

Drought area:

Payments on 1933 accounts..	\$ 215,186 81
April 1-August 31, 1937..	1,917,335 00
Sept. 1-March 31, GGW Sept. 29/37..	7,000,000 00
Further special supplementary estimate, 1937-38..	2,000,000 00

Other area:

Grants-in-aid, 1937-38..	2,760,000 00
Direct relief accts., 1933 & 1934..	36,594 22

Feed and Fodder

Drought area:

April..	207,055 00
May 1-Mar. 31..	8,900,000 00
Further special supplementary estimate, 1937-38	586,132 00

Other area: 998,916 00

Re-establishment of settlers..	160,000 00
Re-establishment of settlers, 1936-37 agreement..	39,644 36
Relief settlement..	16,630 90
Youth training	51,185 40
Public works	459,077 24
Farm placement and supplementary plans..	1,072,295 57

\$26,420,052 50

TABLE VI-A

DOMINION ASSISTANCE TO ALBERTA IN RESPECT OF RELIEF FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 1937-38

Direct Relief

Drought area, April 1-Aug. 31..	\$ 165,000 00
Sept. 1-Mar. 31..	589,920 00
Grants-in-aid..	1,530,000 00

Feed and Fodder

Drought area, April, 1937..	175,000 00
July 15-Mar 31..	408,099 00
Other area..	27,141 00
Re-establishment of settlers..	6,473 00
Re-establishment of settlers (1936-37 agreement)..	17,478 85
Relief settlement..	11,545 88
Relief works..	320,126 56
Youth training..	1,598 57
Farm placement and supplementary plans..	94,585 01
Work for transients..	169,805 97

\$ 3,516,773 84

TABLE VI-B

*POPULATION, TOTAL ACREAGE, OCCUPIED ACREAGE, ACRES OF IMPROVED LAND AND NUMBER OF FARMS OF MANITOBA, SASKATCHEWAN AND ALBERTA WITHIN THE **AREA AS DEFINED FOR THE ACTIVITIES OF THE P.F.R.A. BY THE EXECUTIVE TO THE COMMITTEE ON LAND UTILIZATION

	Population			Total Acreage	Occupied Acreage	Acres Improved Land	Number of Farms
	Urban	Rural	Total				
Manitoba.....	32,770	89,767	122,537	6,279,040	5,438,499	3,831,158	15,194
Saskatchewan.....	217,795	354,774	572,569	46,554,880	39,315,129	25,744,091	81,576
Alberta.....	154,486	167,228	321,714	31,952,640	22,157,303	10,264,550	35,390
Prairie Provinces.....	405,051	611,769	1,016,820	84,786,560	66,910,931	39,839,799	132,160

* 1931 Census of Canada.

** June 1937.

TABLE VI-C

POPULATION, TOTAL ACREAGE, ACRES OF IMPROVED LAND AND NUMBER OF FARMS IN THE THREE PRAIRIE PROVINCES (CENSUS OF THE PRAIRIE PROVINCES 1936)

	Manitoba	Saskatchewan	Alberta	Total Prairie Provinces
Population—				
Urban.....	310,927	280,371	286,447	877,745
Rural.....	400,289	650,522	486,335	1,537,146
Total.....	711,216	930,893	772,782	2,414,891
Farm population.....	261,169	573,894	400,390	1,235,453
Total area (acres) ⁽¹⁾	140,622,720	152,304,000	159,232,000	442,158,720
Occupied acreage.....	15,668,927	56,903,639	40,539,934	113,112,500
Acres improved land.....	8,854,986	33,631,608	18,363,363	60,849,957
Number of farms.....	57,774	142,391	100,358	300,523
Value farm property.....	\$301,542,660	\$1,011,393,331	\$675,330,577	\$1,988,266,568

⁽¹⁾ Census 1931.

SEED GRAIN—FEED—FODDER

¹ Before dealing specifically with the efforts which the Governments are making to-day to meet the requirements of the farmers in respect to feed, fodder and seed grain, it might be well to refer to the manner in which these problems were met in the past.

¹ Information *re* seed grain largely furnished by courtesy of Dr. F. H. Auld, Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Saskatchewan.

Provision for seed grain and seeding supplies have always been a serious problem following poor crops. In 1908 the federal Government came to the assistance of homesteaders on unpatented lands on the prairies and seeding supplies were furnished to the value of \$326,511.96. As security for these advances liens were given by the recipients in favour of the Dominion Government. Up until March 31, 1938, there is only \$7,276.53 outstanding against these advances.

In the same year (1908) the province of Saskatchewan made advances to the owners of patented lands to the amount of \$566,005.91. Up until March 31, 1938, there is still outstanding some \$32,000 plus interest.

Following the light crop of 1914 the federal Government made advances for seed grain to the extent of \$5,578,451.29 and for relief and fodder \$3,077,247.12 or a total of \$8,655,698.41. The amount outstanding on account of these advances as at March 31, 1938, is \$861,345.36.

It is interesting to note that the seed advances made by the Government in 1915 contributed to one of the greatest crops in the history of Saskatchewan, yielding an average of 25.1 bushels to the acre.

After 1914-15 it was not necessary, until 1919 and 1920, to spend large sums for seed grain or relief assistance. At that time two successive years of relatively poor crops on account of unfavourable moisture conditions required an expenditure in Saskatchewan of \$3,250,000 to maintain agricultural operations. The requirements of the ensuing years were comparatively small, running from less than \$100,000 to a maximum of under \$300,000. During the years 1926, 1927 and 1928 municipal councils were able without either federal or provincial help to meet any demands that arose for assistance in supplying seed grain or other necessities.

In 1931, however, the crop failure, coupled with the low price of wheat, developed so serious a situation that the provincial Government of that period appointed the Saskatchewan Relief Commission, as we have seen, to deal with the whole problem of relief for man and beast.

RELIEF LEGISLATION

In the area in which it operated, the relief commission issued direct relief and purchased and supplied fodder, feed grain and seed grain and seeding supplies directly to farmers. The Municipalities Relief Act of 1920 was the forerunner of relief legislation and provided for advances of flour, coal and fodder, the conditions and procedure being similar to those pertaining to the Municipalities Seed Grain Act. In 1933 this Act was amended and provided for advances of relief by municipalities under an agreement with the Saskatchewan Relief Commission whereby the commission issued the orders approved by the municipal council and charged a portion of the costs to the municipality. The Department of Agriculture now purchases seed grain, feed grain and fodder to supplement local supplies in deficiency areas and issues directions for the guidance of municipal councils in granting assistance to applicants for seed and seeding supplies. Since the commission was wound up in 1934 the supervision of expenditures for direct relief (meaning the provision of food, clothing, fuel or shelter) has been vested in the Bureau of Labour and Public Welfare, of the Department of Municipal Affairs. All such arrangements are governed by regulations and agreements between the municipalities and the province, and between the province and the Dominion.

Legislation was also passed permitting mortgagees to advance seed grain and seeding supplies to their borrowers and to add the cost thereof to the mortgage. A lien on the growing crop is given by the Act which contains provision by which the Government may guarantee the mortgagee against loss if the advance proves to be uncollectable. As the cumulative burden of crop failure and low commodity prices pressed more heavily upon farmers in a large

area, causing individual and municipal credit to become exhausted, the guarantee of the provincial Government and eventually of the federal Government became involved, in order to finance seeding operations, while the financing of direct relief and winter maintenance of live stock within designated areas was assumed by the federal Government by agreement with the province. Current legislation respecting these matters now contains several special provisions which when they first appeared in provincial acts were regarded as "temporary." But as recovery from these emergency conditions has been delayed these provisions tend to persist in our legislation.

Unpaid seed grain indebtedness incurred prior to December 31, 1934, whether payable to the relief commission or to a rural municipality, was cancelled by legislative enactment of 1937 in the area to which the voluntary debt adjustment plan of 1936 applied. Unpaid advances of fodder and feed grain for winter maintenance of live stock up to March 31, 1935, were cancelled at the same time.

Provision for the maintenance of live stock during the winter months is also made. Local supplies of fodder and grain are ascertained with a view to determining whether, and to what extent, there is a local deficiency. After an agreement between the municipality and the province has been signed, supplies of grain and fodder are bought by provincial officers for the municipality to supplement local supplies if there is a deficiency. The municipal council issues orders in favour of the farmer for the assistance for which he has been approved. These orders may be "local transfers" against available supplies in the hands of farmers or "ex-elevator" or "ex-car" orders for grain or fodder purchased by the Department of Agriculture on behalf of the municipality. Orders filled by farmers on so-called "local transfer" forms follow the same routine as the direct relief orders, but payments for purchases of ex-elevator grain or carloads of fodder or grain are made by the Department of Agriculture on the invoice of the vendor, after approval by the provincial auditor.

Supplies for use in connection with seeding operations, including both fodder, feed grain, tractor fuel and implement repairs, are similarly determined by consideration of individual applications. When these requirements have been compiled and local supplies are ascertained, the department undertakes, at the request of the municipality, and when its requirements are confirmed by the local representative of the Government, to purchase such grain and fodder as are needed to supply local deficiencies. Order forms for fodder and grain are the same as those used for winter maintenance, but they are marked by the municipal officers so as to indicate that the supplies are required for seeding operations. Such orders are also to be countersigned by the agricultural representative as a precaution against exceeding authorizations.

The agreement between the municipalities and the provincial Government provides for the proceeds of bank loans for seeding to be paid to the Minister of Agriculture in trust, to be disbursed to meet obligations incurred by him on behalf of the municipality. The payment of local transfers of seed grain and supplies follows much the same method as has been explained in connection with direct relief. The vendors of grain and carload shipments of fodder submit their invoices direct to the Department of Agriculture. Municipal officials furnish that department outturns of cars of fodder and grain so that such purchases are fully accounted for. Railway companies bill the department direct for freight incurred on provincial certificates.

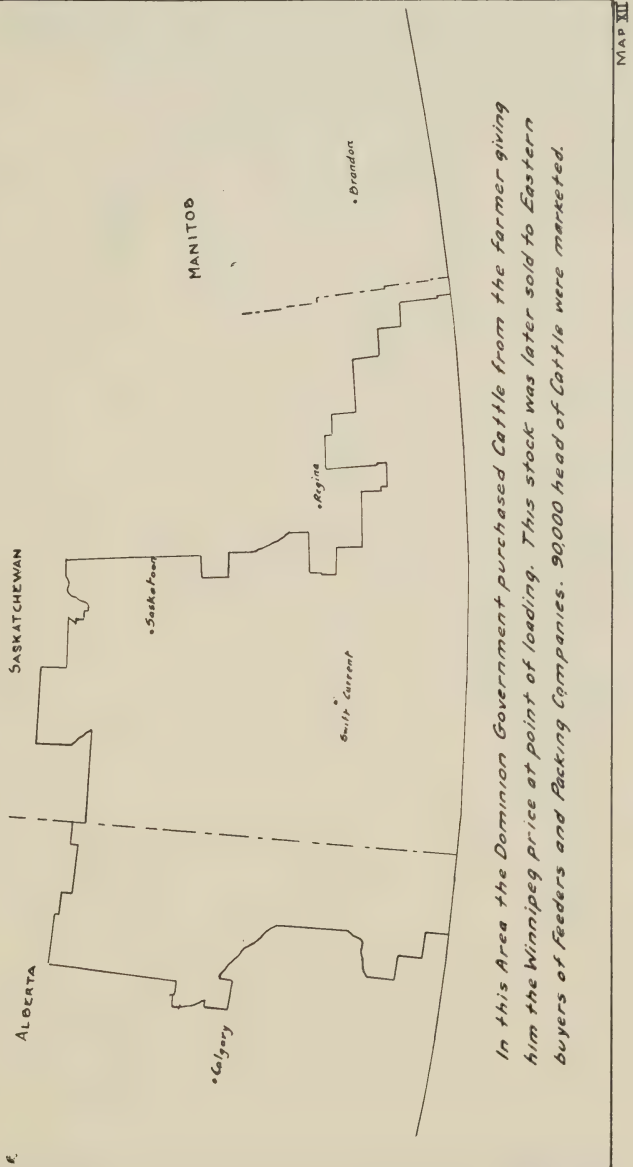
It will be seen by the table on page 41 that very large advances had to be made to the farmers of Saskatchewan for agricultural aid in 1931-2 totalling over \$13,000,000. With the better crop of 1932 and with larger supplies of feed and fodder, the advances were reduced to \$1,255,012. In 1933 the demands reached over \$8,000,000 and in 1934 leaped up to \$14,000,000. In 1935 because of a better crop and ample feed the amount spent dropped to \$3,805,306, but with the widespread drought of 1936 nearly \$10,000,000 was required.

PROVISION FOR SURPLUS CATTLE AND GRAZING GROUNDS

Then came the catastrophe of 1937 with scarcely a blade of grass over enormous areas. Because of the desperate position of the farmers for lack of feed and fodder, the Dominion Government undertook to buy their surplus cattle and make provision for grazing grounds and for feed and fodder. (Map XII.) Approximately 15,000 cattle were purchased from the Alberta farmers and 75,000 cattle from the farmers of Saskatchewan at a fair price, and were sold either to the abattoirs for canning or to eastern and American buyers. This transaction cost the Government some \$340,000 net, but it was a great help to the farmers, for it was known that it was physically impossible to secure

DOMINION-PROVINCIAL RELIEF OPTIONAL CATTLE MARKETING PLAN

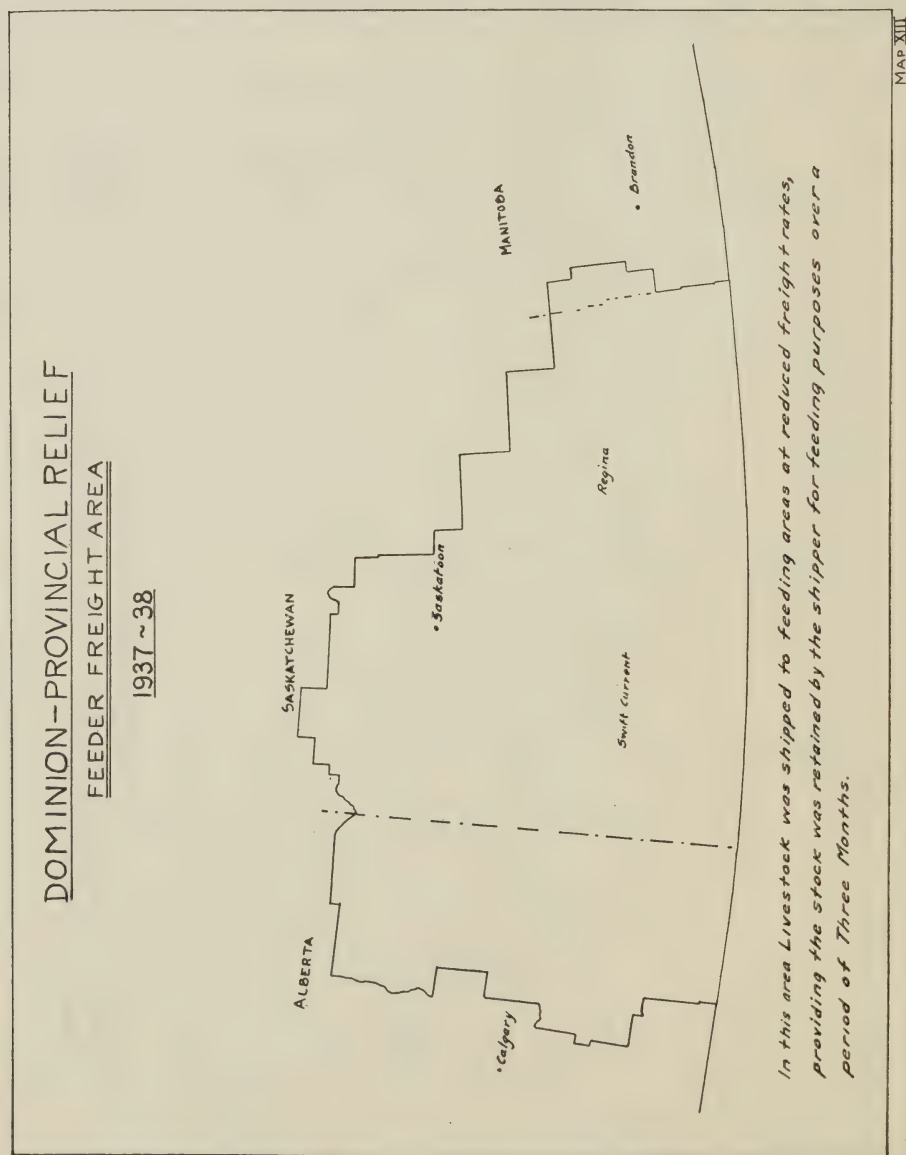
1937 ~ 38.



enough feed and fodder to carry all of the stock during the winter. Some 70,000 more head of cattle were sold and shipped to eastern farmers on a half-freight basis on condition that the cattle would be kept and fed in Eastern Canada for at least three months. (Map XIII.) Thousands of head of cattle were sent into Manitoba to the grazing grounds of Carberry and to other pastures. It is estimated by the Minister of Agriculture that some 474,000 head of cattle and calves were taken out of the drought area in 1937.⁽¹⁾

Instructions were issued to all municipalities in the drought area that it would be necessary to reduce their herds if those horses and cattle indispensable to farm work were to be maintained. A farmer was permitted to carry as many

¹ Hon. J. G. Gardiner in House of Commons, February 3, 1938.

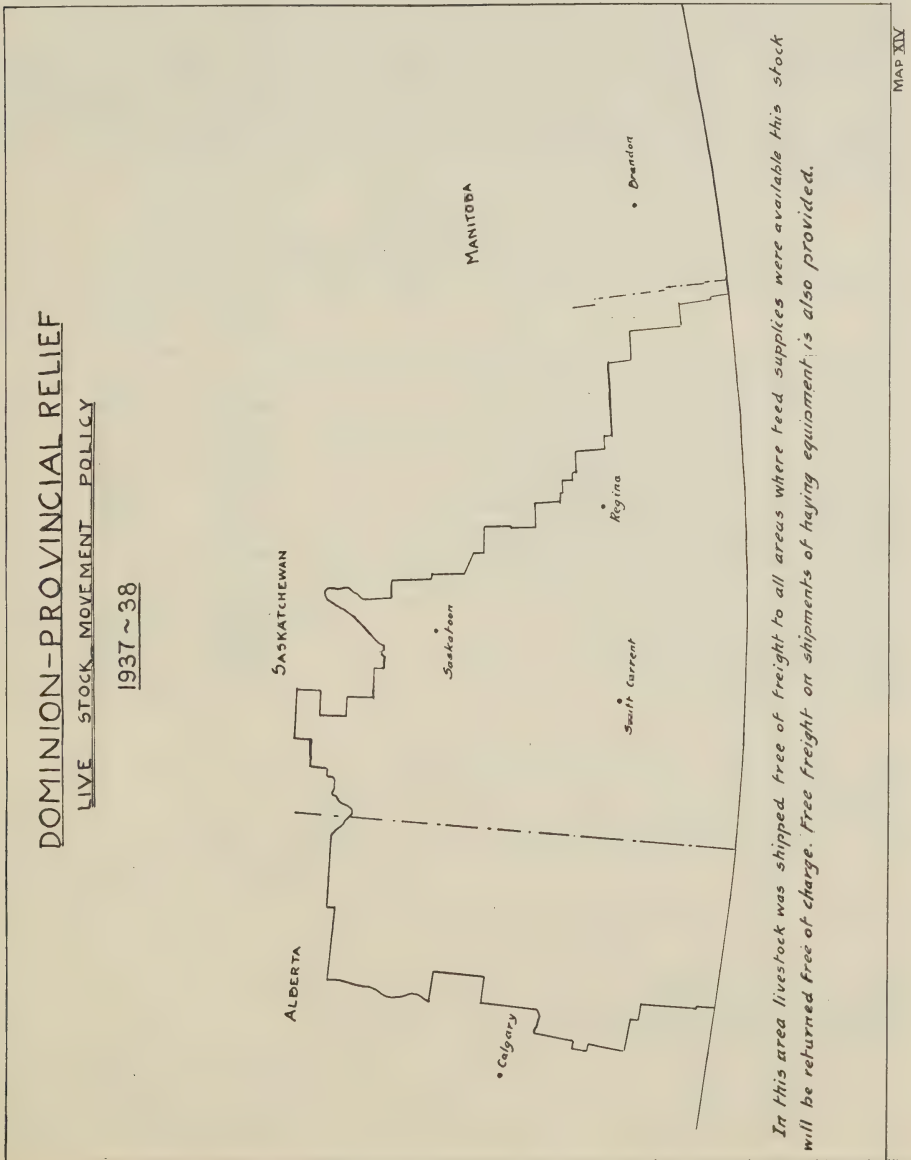


horses and cattle as he could provide for himself but if he must look to the Government for assistance he was asked to reduce to the following schedule:—

Horses.—One work horse for each 35 cultivated acres, after deducting acres to be farmed with available tractor power; maximum number of work horses must not exceed 12, with one colt for each 4 work horses.

Cattle.—Where there were not more than two dependent children, two milk cows; three to four dependent children, three milk cows. Maximum: four milk cows. In addition to the above the equivalent of one steer for meat, if other sources of meat supplies were not available.

Swine.—Maximum of one brood sow, plus one pig for every three members of the family.



Poultry.—Maximum flock of 50 birds.

All farmers were urged to put up for their own use all fodder available locally, including Russian thistle, roughage of any kind and old straw stacks, so as to avoid as far as possible shortage of feed before spring.

Buyers on behalf of the Government covered Alberta, Manitoba, North Dakota and Minnesota in their efforts to secure enough feed and fodder to meet the situation. During the fiscal year, feed grain distributed for consumption amounted to 5,900,000 bushels of oats, 1,600,000 bushels of barley and 1,200,000 bushels of wheat and additional quantities of corn and mill feeds. In addition to this, some 378,000 tons of hay were shipped in by the Government and a further amount of 110,000 tons of hay by private purchasers was shipped in under free freight certificates, making a grand total of 488,000 tons. All the feed and fodder shipped into the federal drought areas of Saskatchewan and Alberta is a gift outright to the farmers from the Dominion Government (Map XIV).

In order to show how great is the feed and fodder problem the statement shown below, prepared by the Department of Agriculture of Saskatchewan, is given in detail. From additional requests for feed and fodder which are now arriving daily, there are indications that the estimate is considerably below the requirements.

TABLE VII
WINTER MAINTENANCE, SEPTEMBER 1, 1937—MARCH 31, 1938

	Federal Area	Provincial Area	Total
Number of applicants for agricultural aid.....	43,887	25,748	69,635
Total number of horses shown on applications.....	304,815	172,474	477,289
Total number of horses for which feed being supplied by government.....	247,618	121,044	368,662
Total number of cattle shown on applications.....	240,246	181,662	421,908
Total number of cattle for which feed being supplied by government.....	132,588	64,761	197,349
Total number of sheep shown on applications.....	45,396	9,035	54,431
Total number of sheep for which feed being supplied by government.....	612	1,022	1,634
Total number of swine shown on applications.....	118,817	82,478	201,295
Total number of swine for which feed being supplied by government.....	73,974	37,051	111,025
Total number of poultry shown on applications.....	2,217,515	1,252,210	3,469,725
Total number of poultry for which feed being supplied by government.....	1,695,245	794,210	2,489,455
Total wheat requirements (bus.).....	1,456,716	196,750	1,653,466
Total oats requirements (bus.).....	3,508,823	1,526,949	5,035,772
Total barley requirements (bus.).....	459,333	199,763	659,096
Total fodder requirements (tons).....	350,481	62,815	413,296
Total cost—including freight).....	\$8,446,842	\$2,052,367	\$10,499,209
Shipment of live stock to pasture and pasture fees			
Freight charges on the movement of live stock to pasture and return.....	\$300,000		
Cost of pasturing live stock at Carberry.....	28,000		
Feeding and pasturing fees at points other than Carberry.....	20,000		
Total.....	\$ 348,000	—	\$ 348,000
Total.....	\$8,794,842	\$2,052,367	\$10,847,209
Estimated additional feed grain to meet requirements to Mar. 31, 1938			
Federal Area: 380,000 horses and cattle at 4 bus. oats per head— 1,520,000 bus. at 60c. per bus.....	912,000	—	912,000
Provincial Area: 120,000 horses and cattle at 4 bus. oats per head— 480,000 bus. at 60c. per bus.....	—	288,000	288,000
Grand total.....	\$9,706,842	\$2,340,367	\$12,047,209
Less appropriations.....	7,900,000	1,000,000	8,900,000
Balance required.....	\$1,806,842	\$1,340,367	\$3,147,209

SEED AND SEEDING SUPPLIES

Owing to the almost total failure of the wheat crop of 1937 the problem of providing seed for the sowing this spring is one of the first magnitude. Negotiations to this end have been carried on between the federal and provincial governments. As a result the federal Government has arranged for the banks to loan to the municipalities of Saskatchewan an amount not to exceed \$18,000,000. Of this amount up to \$14,500,000 is guaranteed by the Dominion Government, provided that amount is still outstanding by July 1, 1939. This arrangement is to cover the entire province of Saskatchewan.

Arrangements were also made with the mortgage companies authorizing rural municipalities in the marginal areas to make advances within the schedule laid down by the provincial Government and these advances will be guaranteed by the provincial Government.

It is estimated that the above arrangements will provide seed (wheat, oats and barley) and seeding supplies up to 250 acres per farmer.

Under the arrangements a mortgage company may advance more than the above amount and the province may guarantee it provided the advance is approved of by the provincial Department of Agriculture.

If the seeding program for the province does not reach the \$18,000,000 amount above mentioned then a larger maximum per farmer may be permitted.

The above arrangements involve seeding supplies, which includes feed grain and fodder for the horses and gas, oil, etc., for the tractors.

These arrangements were made on the basis that the government and mortgage companies together will have to make provision for financing the seeding of 9,000,000 acres of land, which is about half the total acreage which will be seeded.

Arrangements were also made with the province of Alberta by which the Dominion Government guaranteed bank loans for seed and seeding supplies up to the sum of \$1,900,000.

FARM PLACEMENT AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN

There was a large body of men, usually employed as casual labour, who found themselves stranded by the conditions prevailing throughout the country as a result of the depression and succession of crop failures. In order to care for these men an agreement was entered into between the Saskatchewan government and the Dominion Government by which a bonus of \$5 a month was to be paid to all men accepting farm employment, who, according to the terms of the agreement, might be described as "single, destitute, homeless and unemployed." During that year and the following years, however, large numbers of farm labourers who, having received no pay from the farmers for their summer work and unable to continue residing at the home of their employers because their employers were unable to provide even board in return for their services, were forced to leave the farms and seek work in nearby towns or cities. In an effort to provide for at least some of these men, a relief camp was opened at Dundurn in 1932 but owing to the limited size of the camp, together with the fact that admission was restricted to men who could obtain medical certificates for first class condition physically, the camp did not provide sufficient accommodation necessary to take care of the thousands of unemployed. This camp was closed in June of 1936 and the men sent out to work on projects of the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act. None of these projects, however, were capable of absorbing even the farm workers who were seeking work or relief. Consequently in the fall of 1936 there was again a demand for the farm bonus scheme. It was decided to bring to the attention of the federal authorities the necessity of enlarging on the plan to include some inducement or compensation to the farmer in providing adequate board for such men who might desire to remain on the farm as farm workers.

The provincial Government, believing that the cost of unemployment should be borne by the federal Government, asked the federal Government to offer the farmers \$5 a month as an inducement to take men under the farm bonus scheme. It was also decided that the plan should be enlarged so as to provide not only for men but also for women and married couples. In addition to this a bonus of \$2.50 a month was paid from the time the application was accepted until March 31, provided the applicant was still employed. The province asked for a further extension for the month of April and the labourer received \$7.50 for that month.

The success of the plan is evidenced by the fact that more people have been taking advantage of it each succeeding year, thereby greatly reducing the unemployment problem in the cities, towns, and villages during the winter months.

The following figures show the number of persons given employment under this scheme and the relative cost for each year. The cost of this plan has been

1931-32.....	7,937 persons.....		\$ 282,190 28
1932-33.....	6,723 persons.....		132,356 00
1932 (summer months).. <td>362 persons.....</td> <td></td> <td>3,135 79</td>	362 persons.....		3,135 79
1933-34.....	9,660 persons.....		179,676 16
1934-35.....	5,492 persons.....		78,362 03
1935-36.....	6,371 persons.....		104,331 11
1936-37.....	27,898 persons	Men..... 20,913.....	1,652,770 11
		Females.. 4,805.....	
	Married couples.....	1,090 (2,180 individuals)	
1937-38 (incomplete)....	27,066 persons	Men..... 18,199.....	1,846,000 00
		Females.. 6,315.....	
	Married couples.....	1,276 (2,552 individuals)	
			<hr/>
			\$ 4,278,821 48

met equally by the Dominion and provincial Governments.

This plan has been a great success in providing homes for thousands of men and women who were practically homeless. It is expected also, that many of these people who are engaged on the farms for the winter will remain permanently in farm homes, either as hired help or as tenants.

Section III

THE NEED AND THE NATION'S RESPONSE (Continued)

OTHER SOURCES OF RELIEF

DISTRIBUTION OF FOODSTUFFS SUPPLIED BY THE DOMINION GOVERNMENT FOR THE FEDERAL DROUGHT AREAS IN SASKATCHEWAN AND ALBERTA, 1937

Partly owing to the fact that there were large surpluses of foodstuffs in the eastern provinces, which threatened to glut the market and thus cause distress among the farmers for lack of opportunity to sell their products or to sell only at ruinous prices, and partly owing to the great need for a more varied diet on the prairies, the Dominion Government decided to purchase certain food supplies to send to the farmers of the stricken areas of the West. The supplies were purchased under Governor General's Warrant P.C. 2422, which authorized the expenditure of \$1,000,000 for this purpose. The purchases were made chiefly in the Maritime Provinces, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba and British Columbia.

By agreement between the federal government and the Government of the province of Saskatchewan, 177 rural municipalities and local improvement districts in the province of Saskatchewan were designated as the areas which had suffered most from the crop failures of the past eight years and hence were entitled to share in this special distribution of food supplies. Similarly by agreement between the federal Government and the Government of the province of Alberta, 53 rural municipalities and local improvement districts in Alberta were designated to share in this special distribution.

The Dominion Department of Agriculture issued instructions as to the allotment of the supplies on the basis of five to a family. The instructions were as follows:—

- 30 lb. of cheese
- 33 lb. of beans
- 150 lb. of apples
- 44 lb. of fish
- 100 lb. of turnips.
- 150 lb. of other vegetables.

These instructions were followed as closely as possible. A total of 285 cars of apples, 142 cars of turnips, 242 cars of cabbage, carrots, parsnips and beets, and 220 cars of assorted fish, cheese and beans were distributed.

The cars of apples and vegetables were billed direct to their destination. The cars containing fish, cheese and beans were all billed to Regina where the contents were warehoused, repacked into suitable size for distribution and then reshipped to their ultimate destination. This involved a great deal of warehouse space. At one time as many as 66 men were engaged in the task of preparing the fish, cheese and beans for distribution.

It was not necessary to send vegetables into Alberta, these having already been supplied through Mr. A. A. MacKenzie, Commissioner of Relief and Public Welfare for the province of Alberta. Arrangements were also made from his office for a supply of apples, largely donated by the growers in British Columbia, so it was necessary to send in only 23 cars of apples to Alberta. The arrangements made by the Alberta authorities were greatly appreciated for it made possible a wider distribution of apples and vegetables in sections of Saskatchewan which had suffered most by the drought.

This distribution of food by the Government direct to the consumer is very suggestive as a method of reducing relief costs. The total cost of the food sup-

plies to some 73,449 families (an average of 5 to a family) or 377,245 persons, was \$1,000,000. This includes the purchase of the supplies and all handling and administration costs and works out to \$13.61 per family.

The responsibility of distributing the supplies throughout the towns, villages and rural municipalities was placed upon the shoulders of the secretary-treasurers, reeves and councillors and the overseers of the towns. They measured up to a very difficult task and discharged their duties in a fair and efficient manner.

No one who had a right to be served was purposely overlooked. It is no small task to divide the contents of 889 carloads of food supplies among 377,245 people over wide and often thinly populated areas to the satisfaction of all. Very few complaints have come in and adjustments were made when found necessary. Special mention should be made of the work of the secretary-treasurers of the rural municipalities. Upon them fell the work of directing the task of distribution. Immediately upon allotment of cars or parts of cars the municipal secretaries were reached by telephone. This was considered in the best interests of distribution since the prairie winter weather was close at hand, and also in order that information should be relayed throughout the districts concerned to ensure the quickest possible delivery to the people.

The railroads gave the best of service. Special mention should be made of the fine co-operation given by Mr. W. J. Anderson, district freight agent of the C.P.R., and by Mr. R. E. Johnston, district freight agent of the C.N.R. They did everything in their power to assist in the smooth working of the plans for speedy distribution.

The Department of Agriculture at Ottawa had recipes prepared showing the best way of preparing fish, cheese and beans for the table. These recipes were greatly appreciated by the recipients and added much to the value of the foodstuffs provided by the Government.

The supplies sent out by the federal Government have been greatly appreciated by the people who received them. A larger number of letters have been sent in from ratepayers' associations, congregations of churches, community clubs and individuals expressing their appreciation and sincere thanks. Frequently the high quality of the foodstuffs is referred to and also the fairness of distribution made by the municipal councils.

When good crops return to the West, with the accompanying purchasing power thus placed in the hands of the farmers, the appreciation of apples, cheese and deep-sea fish that has been created on the prairies this winter should result in an increased demand for foodstuffs of this nature and greatly increased interprovincial trade should be permanently established.

SASKATCHEWAN VOLUNTARY RURAL RELIEF COMMITTEE

When the Canadian public began to realize the extent of the drought of 1931 and of the distress which was following in its wake a great wave of sympathy broke over the entire country and churches, lodges, welfare organizations and individuals began to vie with each other in their desire to help. Some 249 carloads of vegetables, fruit and clothing were hurried to Saskatchewan to relieve those in want. The distribution of these carloads was made through the Saskatchewan Relief Commission, assisted by local voluntary committees.

The needs of 1932 were not so great as the previous year but it was considered wise to administer the voluntary gifts through a committee known as the Saskatchewan Voluntary Rural Relief Committee under the chairmanship of Mr. W. W. Champ of Regina. Some 49 carloads of vegetables, fruit and clothing, of which 34 came from various parts of Saskatchewan itself, and the balance from other provinces, were administered by this committee.

In addition, the coal mine operators of the province donated some 64 carloads of coal to be distributed among the needy schools of the relief area.

The Voluntary Rural Relief Committee has continued to operate through the years until the present time. Mr. Champ continued as chairman of the committee until 1937 when he resigned and his place was taken by Dr. J. W. Hedley of Regina.

The table shown below gives the story of the response to need made by the various provinces throughout the years, except for the year 1931, for which the records could not be traced.

TABLE VIII
SASKATCHEWAN VOLUNTARY RURAL RELIEF COMMITTEE
Cars of fruit and vegetables received and distributed since 1932

	1931-32	1932-33	1933-34	1934-35	1935-36	1936-37	1937-38	Total
Saskatchewan.....	—	34	122	11	62	7	5	241
Ontario.....	—	—	82	159	—	91	309	641
British Columbia.....	—	—	51	52	—	117	133	353
Prince Edward Island.....	—	—	11	62	—	8	35	116
Nova Scotia.....	—	—	6	9	—	9	19	43
New Brunswick.....	—	—	5	23	—	13	36	77
Alberta.....	—	—	2	8	—	1	29	40
Manitoba.....	—	—	—	2	—	—	177	179
Quebec.....	—	—	—	3	—	—	28	47
Other Provinces.....	—	15	—	—	—	—	—	15
All Provinces.....	249	—	—	—	—	—	—	249
	249	49	279	329	62	262	771	2,001

In addition to the above, thousands of bales of clothing were sent out, chiefly by the churches.

The above record is an eloquent testimony to the unity of the Canadian people. In a magnificent way the various provinces which constitute our Dominion responded to the needs of the West. The prairie farmers, thousands of whom suffered eight successive crop failures, felt that Canada was standing by them not only officially, as shown by the generous treatment accorded by the federal Government, but by thousands of individuals who were giving freely from their own cellars to express their sympathy and goodwill from all parts of Canada to the stricken areas of the West.

The Prairie Provinces would have it known from Vancouver Island on the west to Prince Edward Island on the east that the thought and care and sacrifice represented by these voluntary relief cars are deeply appreciated. From the bottom of our hearts we say "Thank you."

The West is also greatly indebted to the Canadian Pacific Railways and the Canadian National Railways for carrying these relief cars absolutely free of all freight rates. In addition to this the railways have given half rates on feed and fodder and other commodities for the farmers.

Below are tables which show very definitely the enormous contribution which the railways have made in their efforts to meet the situation on the prairies.

SUMMARY OF REVENUE CONTRIBUTED BY REDUCED AND FREE TRANSPORTATION
FOR CHARITY PURPOSES

Canadian National Railways

	Reduced Arrangements	Free Arrangements	Total
1930..	\$ 36,809 64	.....	\$ 36,809 64
1931..	308,017 62	\$ 60,943 50	368,961 12
1932..	296,033 78	24,416 53	320,450 31
1933..	114,051 25	69,181 07	183,232 32
1934..	459,014 65	75,990 60	535,005 25
1935..	278,862 18	9,799 15	288,661 33
1936..	127,052 92	53,244 45	180,297 37
1937..	518,537 37	173,314 07	691,851 44
	\$2,138,379 41	\$466,889 37	\$2,605,268 78

Canadian Pacific Railways

	Reduced and free arrangements combined
1930..	\$ 49,078 29
1931..	491,935 86
1932..	427,256 40
1933..	244,303 65
1934..	713,322 50
1935..	384,872 15
1936..	240,390 48
1937..	1,010,085 71
	<hr/>
	\$3,561,245 04

THE CANADIAN RED CROSS SOCIETY

The Red Cross has ever been ready to meet an emergency. In September of 1930 the provincial Government approached Mr. W. F. Marshall, commissioner of the Saskatchewan division of the Red Cross, requesting that the division undertake the responsibility of administering clothing relief to families in the drought area, comprising some 60 rural municipalities. This relief was to be afforded chiefly to children of school age in order that they would not be forced to give up school for lack of suitable clothing. The Government agreed to provide the necessary funds for the clothing, extra staff required, express on parcels and other expenses. The Red Cross Society willingly accepted this responsibility and by December 31 of that year 1,611 families had been assisted and 8,000 children kept at school who otherwise could not have attended. The goods distributed (shoes, overshoes, stockings, mittens, underwear, overcoats, scarves, cloth and yarn) were in most cases purchased from factories in Ontario at wholesale prices.

In February and March of 1931 this phase of the work was extended beyond the drought area in order to give assistance to families in the northern part of the province.

During the summer of 1931, due to crop conditions, the Government realized the necessity of repeating the clothing relief and in September the Red Cross was asked to conduct clothing relief in an area comprising 205 rural municipalities and local improvement districts, chiefly in the north and new areas of the province to which numerous families had migrated from the dry districts.

During the two winters 1930-31 and 1931-32 the Red Cross Society in Saskatchewan administered the clothing relief supplied by the provincial Government to 53,007 men, women and children throughout Saskatchewan at a cost of \$235,921.08, less special donations for the purpose totalling \$3,649, or a net expenditure for the provincial Government of \$232,271.97. The Saskatchewan Relief Commission administered the clothing relief for the most seriously affected municipalities in the drought area.

Along with the emergency clothing relief, in October of 1931 the Red Cross Society in Saskatchewan was approached by the trustees and officers of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor's Emergency Distress Fund to undertake the administration of cases of sick persons requiring assistance. This fund was organized for the express purpose of providing assistance to people who were without adequate or any aid during the winter months and the monies collected from cities, towns and villages in the province were expended on medicines, including insulin, to large numbers each month, transportation of cancer cases to and from the cancer clinics of the cities and on sick room supplies. It was realized that the Saskatchewan Relief Commission could not possibly make provision for this work. The Red Cross Society readily complied with the request of the board of trustees and at the close of 1931, 239 cases of illness had been dealt with at an expenditure of \$1,269.20. The fund was carried on until September of 1933, at which time 3,491 sick persons had been cared for since the fund's inception in 1931 at a total outlay of \$75,798.64.

No funds had been provided through the drought years to replenish bedding in rural homes and the Minister of Finance, the Hon. C. A. Dunning, requested the national headquarters of the Red Cross to assume responsibility for this household replenishment for the drought regions in the three Prairie Provinces and to undertake the cost of the same. From a survey of the three regions it was discovered that three-quarters of the requirements pertained to Saskatchewan and approximately one-eighth to each of the others.

Investigators were sent out to visit the homes and to learn of the actual requirements. Meantime the national office appealed to textile firms in the East for donations of bedding. They responded most generously and in a very short time donations approximating a value of \$129,000 were on their way to the West, carried without charge by both railways.

In addition to these donations the national office of the Red Cross purchased direct from manufacturers, blankets to the value of \$231,000. The funds for this purpose were largely donated by private individuals from Ontario and Quebec. Blankets to the value of \$29,000 were also provided by the Department of National Defence.

THE RURAL SCHOOLS

The effects of continued crop failure are necessarily cumulative and it is not surprising that education in the rural areas has suffered most severely during the past eight years. The rural municipalities have not been in a position in any sense adequately to support the schools. In addition to this, the provincial Government in 1932, because of falling revenues, cut off the school grants, both rural and urban, by $33\frac{1}{3}$ per cent. The trustees of the schools were compelled to pass this reduction on to the teachers. How great was the cut in salaries which had to be borne by the teachers is shown by the fact that the average salary in a rural school in 1921 paid to a first-class male teacher was \$1,452, whereas by 1936 the average was reduced to \$512. In 1921 the average salary in a rural school for a first-class female teacher was \$1,388. The average in 1936 was \$407.

The trustees were forced to greatly reduce the appropriations for school supplies and in many cases could not provide fuel with which to heat the little school house. Many of the school houses require major repairs.

In an effort to meet the situation the Government in 1937 decided to bring into operation a 2 per cent sales tax, the income so derived to be spent exclusively for education after deducting the cost of administration. This tax has enabled the Government to restore the $33\frac{1}{3}$ per cent reduction which was made in the school grants in 1932. To restore these grants involved an expenditure of some \$308,945. As a further result of this education tax the Government was enabled to pay to the school trustees the sum of \$190,000, advances on grants for the fall term. This was a great assistance to the trustees and to the school teachers themselves. The Government has also been able to make small loans to school districts to purchase supplies and to make needed repairs.

Up to March 1, 1938, the provincial Government has been able to loan over \$100,000 to school districts. These loans are to enable the trustees to reduce arrears on teachers' salaries made prior to January 1, 1935. Already 1,400 teachers have benefited by these loans.

The schools have had to suffer just as the family and all social services have had to suffer. The Department of Education is exceedingly anxious to restore the efficiency of the rural schools of Saskatchewan just as soon as financial conditions generally throughout the country improve.

It is realized that the rural school teachers have had to bear the full impact of the distress of the last few years. The fine courage of hundreds

of teachers in carrying on under the most difficult circumstances and with salaries reduced to almost a vanishing point should not be forgotten when prosperity returns to the prairies.

SPECIAL GRANTS TO 150 RURAL MUNICIPALITIES IN THE FEDERAL DROUGHT AREA, NOVEMBER, 1937, TO MARCH, 1938

Owing to the difficulties which the rural municipalities of the federal drought area have had in financing the administration of the affairs of the municipality, and also the amount of extra work which has been thrown upon the reeve, councillors and secretary-treasurers of the municipality, the federal Government made a grant of \$17,807.50 to assist the municipalities in carrying on their work. Of this amount \$3,570 was in the form of a bonus to the secretary-treasurers, \$6,330 was to assist the municipalities in paying the salaries of the secretary-treasurers, \$2,657.50 was towards office expenses and \$5,250 was on account of the services and travelling expenses of the reeve and councillors.

In addition to the above, special grants totalling \$2,920 were made by the provincial Government to the secretary-treasurers of 139 rural municipalities outside the federal drought area.

MEDICAL AND DENTAL SERVICES

One of the most important forms of social service which suffered as a result of the drought was that of medical care. This was not through any lack of willingness on the part of the doctors to render service whenever called on, but because the drought sufferers in many cases, having no money to pay for services, simply went without them. But, as the drought became more severe and prolonged, many doctors found that they were not receiving income enough to enable them to remain and carry on their practice.

Consequently, the Government of Saskatchewan, first under the Saskatchewan Relief Commission, and later under its own direct administration, instituted a system of grants-in-aid to doctors resident in the affected areas. The earlier grants amounted to \$75 per month in the "A" areas and \$50 to doctors in the "B" areas, those areas in which the drought was less severe. An additional mileage allowance was made for transportation and from 1934 to 1937 a further allowance for drugs and other materials supplied patients.

As the drought continued with increased severity, it was found that this grant was not enough to enable doctors to carry on, as in many cases it constituted, not a minimum, but practically their whole income.

"A study of the situation revealed that a serious exodus of medical practitioners from these areas was being contemplated, if not actually under way. Such would have left large districts without a doctor and thrown an impossible burden upon those remaining, with the inevitable result of a serious collapse of available medical services." (Extract from circular letter from Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs and the Deputy Minister of Public Health to the municipal secretaries, under date of October 6, 1937.)

As a result of the situation, a new plan was worked out by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Saskatchewan and adopted by the Government, becoming effective as from September 1, 1937. This plan provided "a basic retaining grant, guaranteeing a cash income from medical practice of \$150 per month from all sources" to doctors in the "A" areas and made available to doctors in the "B" areas a grant "for necessary work done for relief patients to a maximum of \$100 in any one month. Such grants are to be allowed in the amount of 33½ per cent of the fees set out in the last schedule approved by the Saskatchewan College of Physicians and Surgeons."

An additional allowance was made for mileage in both cases up to a maximum of \$100 per month on the basis of 10 cents per mile for summer driving and 20 cents per mile for winter driving.

Provision was further made for a grant to doctors in the three largest cities of the province "for authorized work done for relief patients referred into the cities, to a maximum of \$100 in any one month. Such grants are to be allowed in the amount of 25 per cent of the fees set out in the last schedule approved by the Saskatchewan College of Physicians and Surgeons."

The new plan also made available a basic grant of \$25 per month to "assist dentists in furnishing dental supplies to relief patients" and a further grant up to a maximum of \$50 per month "based on a report of work done and an assessment of 33½ per cent of the schedule of the Dental Association."

In addition to the payment of the statutory grant of 50 cents per patient per day to the hospitals and \$1 per day per patient to the sanatoria of the province, the Government is, for the present period of most urgent need, paying an additional 75 cents per day to hospitals for each patient from the main drought areas and 50 cents per day for each patient from the marginal areas.

The plan also provides for the supplying of eye-glasses to persons in urgent need of them in the drought areas.

Under the above scheme of grants-in-aid heavy expenditures have already been incurred. These have totalled upwards of one million dollars, as indicated by the tabulations below.

RELIEF GRANTS RE MEDICAL, HOSPITAL AND DENTAL SERVICES*— SASKATCHEWAN

1. Fiscal Years 1931-34 (May 1-April 30)					Sub-totals
1931-32 and 1932-33				\$101,868 37	
1933-34				65,448 33	
May 1, 1934, to Aug. 31, 1934 (4 months)				68,585 86	\$235,902 56
2. Relief Years 1934-38 (Sept. 1-Aug. 31)—Amts. Actually paid out except 1937-38					
	Doctors and Dentists	Hospitals	Drugs	Total	
1934-35	\$ 80,450 62	\$ 69,727 00		\$150,177 62	
1935-36	82,537 28	75,713 67	\$6,600 00	164,850 95	
1936-37	112,158 22	103,406 51	7,311 20	222,875 93	\$537,904 50
2a. 1937-38 (incomplete) (Sept. 1, 1937-Dec. 31, 1937—4 months)					
	123,549 14	82,276 10	6,000 00	211,825 24	211,825 24
Total					\$985,632 30

VOLUNTARY DEBT ADJUSTMENT

There was perhaps never a time when greater recognition has had to be given to the fact that more important than the number of bushels of wheat a farmer grows is the question of the purchasing power of each of those bushels. Low priced wheat would not necessarily entail a great deal of hardship for the man who has it to sell if there prevailed low prices also for the things which he had to buy. During the depression years the index of wheat prices dropped as low as 52, while at the same time the index of 147 items which the farmer had to buy stood at 124, resulting in a devastating loss of his purchasing power.

When we add to this greatly depressed purchasing power of the farmers' wheat, the fact that a majority of them had debts contracted at a time when the value of the dollar was low and which they were being expected to repay with high-valued dollars, of which they had very few, their position became well nigh, if not utterly, hopeless. The Governments of the Western Provinces recognized the plight of the farmers and early in the drought years began to make provision for adjustment of debts on a voluntary basis.

*Figures supplied by the Department of Public Health of Saskatchewan.

THE SASKATCHEWAN PROVINCIAL DEBT ADJUSTMENT BOARD

Saskatchewan had a Debt Adjustment Board headed by Mr. Ed. Oliver previous to 1928. Owing to the good crop of 1928 and the years immediately preceding, the moratory powers previously conferred on the Government were relinquished and an act, to be brought into effect if needed, was placed on the statute books in 1928. This act was made the basis of the act of 1931. In the act of 1931 the first step in the program was the protection of debtors by the enactment of moratory measures. In 1933 the Saskatchewan Provincial Debt Adjustment Board was set up for the two-fold purpose of protecting the debtor against insistent creditors and of acting as a medium between debtors and creditors in effecting voluntary adjustments of existing debts. The first of these purposes it effected by requiring that permission first be obtained from the board before creditors could bring any action in the courts against delinquent debtors.

In achieving the actual reduction of debts the board invited any debtor who felt that his debt burden was becoming impossible, to appear informally before it and to present his case. The board then arranged with the creditor to meet the debtor and, in the presence of a member or a representative of the board, to discuss the whole question. The board had no power of compulsion but could suggest a basis of settlement that was within the power of the debtor to carry out. In a great many cases satisfactory adjustments were made, so that the board was able to report that by the end of the year 1936, reductions in indebtedness had been arranged amounting to more than one million dollars.

THE VOLUNTARY DEBT ADJUSTMENT OFFICE

With the intensification of the distress and the increase in the debt burden due to the long continuance of the drought, the work of the Debt Adjustment Board was supplemented by the opening of the Voluntary Debt Adjustment Office as an agency of the provincial Government. This new office was concerned only with farm debts, of only three types and only within the drought and marginal areas. These three types of debts were: first, first mortgages and agreements of sale; second, tax indebtedness and third, relief debts.

With reference to the first of these, the Government entered into an agreement with the mortgage companies in which the latter agreed to a voluntary reduction of agricultural indebtedness down to a maximum of the outstanding principal as at January 1, 1935, together with two years of unpaid interest, i.e. for the year 1935 and 1936 on the principal as at January 1, 1935. The whole of the reduced indebtedness was to be consolidated in a renewal agreement to run for a period of ten years with interest at 6 per cent per annum, the creditors' rights to be restricted to the collection of the proceeds of one-third of the crop for the years 1937, 1938 and 1939.

Provision was made for the cancellation of all provincial and municipal tax arrears and penalties on land down to a sum equivalent to the last two years' taxes unpaid as at July 1, 1936. In the case of farmers who had kept their taxes paid up, it was felt that some concession should also be granted since these payments were usually made at the expense of great personal sacrifice. Hence it was provided by enactment in 1937 that these farmers could be given a credit on their future taxes to put them on a more nearly equal footing with those farmers whose arrears had been cancelled. Under this enactment tax credits in rural municipalities were given to the extent of one and a half millions of dollars.

The Government also agreed to the cancellation of all relief indebtedness incurred up to August 31, 1934. For the relief year 1934-35 all direct relief then outstanding was cancelled, 60 per cent of the total feed grain issued and still outstanding and 90 per cent of the total fodder issued and still outstanding.

A new Bill passed in the present session of the Legislature provides for the further cancellation of all indebtedness for direct relief and winter maintenance for the relief year 1936-37, within what has come to be known as the "Federal Area".

A further relief from the debt burden was provided in the blanket reduction of interest on farm contracts over the entire province of Saskatchewan to 6 per cent. Apart from the actual write-off of interest, this means a saving in the whole province of approximately five millions of dollars in interest for the year 1937, with a reducing amount of interest saved each year during the lifetime of the new contract. It is estimated that this adjustment will save the farmers a sum of 20 millions of dollars during the term of the agreement, about one-half of which saving will be in the drought and marginal areas of the province.

Up to the end of February, 1938, the Voluntary Debt Adjustment Office has been instrumental in bringing about reduction of debts totalling more than eighty-two millions of dollars in the drought and marginal areas of Saskatchewan alone. These are divided as follows:—

Mortgage and agreement of sale indebtedness...	\$27,050,000
Tax arrears.....	23,000,000
Relief debts.....	32,000,000

In addition to the debt reductions brought about by the Saskatchewan Debt Adjustment Board and the Voluntary Debt Adjustment Office, many similar adjustments were made privately between debtors and creditors, resulting in the writing down of a large undeterminable volume of debts. Many loan companies adopted the policy of granting bonuses on principal payments, that is, each time a debtor made a payment on principal, he was credited with an additional amount greater than the actual payment by a definite percentage.

FARMERS' CREDITORS' ARRANGEMENT ACT

On account of the tremendous load of agricultural debts still existing in 1936, it was felt that even greater powers of debt reduction should be exercised by public authority. Under the British North American Act the powers of a province in the matter of debts were restricted. A province could prevent a creditor from using the courts to enforce collection but it had no power to revise a contract. As the problem became more serious, the Dominion Government in 1934 passed the Farmers' Creditors' Arrangement Act, under which a farmer might secure adjustment of his debts in a way somewhat similar to that in which a bankrupt business man arranges settlement of his debts through the appointment of a receiver. Under this Act official receivers were appointed in various parts of each province to whom any farmer might make application for adjustment of his debts. A meeting of debtor and creditors was called by the receiver at which a settlement might be mutually agreed upon. But all parties must agree to the suggested settlement. The receiver had no power to enforce settlement. Thus far settlement was purely voluntary, as under the previously existing provincial legislation. In cases, however, where all the secured creditors are agreed and where three-quarters of the amount represented by unsecured creditors are also in agreement with the proposed settlement, then the official receiver has power to enforce settlement. But the farmer or any of his creditors might request that the matter be brought before a board of review, for the appointment of which the Act also provided. This board, of which the Hon. Chief Justice Brown of Regina is chairman, was given absolute power to lay down a basis of settlement which would be binding on both the farmer and his creditors. Up to the present boards of review have been set up in all of the provinces in Canada except British Columbia, where the operation of the Act was discontinued by request of the provincial Government.

The Act operates as follows: The farmer applying for adjustment is urged to appear in person before the board to present his case even though he may be represented by counsel. The creditors may also present their case in person or through counsel. Both sides tell their story and all facts bearing on the case are brought out. After the presentation is concluded the three members of the board go through the file and draft a proposal as to how and by how much the farmer's debts should be reduced. In arriving at its findings, the board takes into account the value of the security, the producing power of the land and the farmer's ability to pay. Copies of the proposed arrangement are sent to all parties concerned, who are allowed two weeks in which to prepare and submit further representations and objections. The board then makes its final decision, from which there is no appeal.

Typical adjustments which have been made by the Saskatchewan board follow:—

Before adjustment	After adjustment
\$21,514	\$ 7,714
15,004	5,212
16,125	7,800
13,937	6,936
8,508	2,202
12,209	6,426
26,293	11,290
26,244	11,086
7,770	3,869

It will be seen from the above series of adjustments that a very considerable measure of relief from debt has been granted to farmers appealing for aid. The following is a summary of the adjustments under the Act from its inception up to March 1, 1938.

	Saskatchewan	Manitoba	Alberta
Cases submitted..	6,212	3,550	4,377
Cases concluded..	4,659	3,157	3,297
Total debt involved..	\$43,243,842	\$22,380,314	\$29,505,360
Debt reduction..	14,533,477	9,463,273	11,540,504
Annual interest cut..	966,124	728,824	1,086,964

SUMMARY OF DEBT ADJUSTMENT

According to information compiled by Saskatchewan Government officials late in 1937, debt adjustments in the province up to the end of that year had amounted to approximately \$111,778,000. The details were as follows:—

Voluntary Debt Adjustment (Provincial)	\$ 20,677,963
Pending	7,000,000
Sundry adjustments under provincial acts	1,234,367
Tax adjustments	19,928,000
Relief adjustments	31,000,000
Implement companies	2,850,658
Private mortgages and loan companies (estimate)	22,000,000
Federal Board of Review	7,087,113
Total	\$111,778,101

Section IV

MANITOBA

Manitoba differs from the other two Prairie Provinces owing to the fact that a large part of its population is centred in the city of Winnipeg. The total population of Manitoba at the 1936 census was 711,116, of which almost one-third (215,814) belongs to Winnipeg. About 60 per cent of the entire population is concentrated in Winnipeg and the surrounding suburban municipalities. Eighty-four per cent of all direct relief costs have been spent in Winnipeg and the adjacent municipalities. Most of the rural municipalities by means of heavy curtailments in expenditures have not suffered severely from difficulties arising out of the depression. A serious situation however, developed in the south-western part of the province which was affected by the drought, and relief was also necessary in certain municipalities of the inter-lake regions where there are submarginal lands, and where there has been a chronic condition of distress.

The prosperity of Manitoba is dependent to a large extent on conditions in Saskatchewan and Alberta for it derives considerable income from the wholesale trade in agricultural implements and general merchandise and from the servicing of wheat for the two latter provinces. Wheat has declined in importance in Manitoba during the past quarter of a century and a more diversified form of farm enterprise has developed, coarse grains, poultry, live stock and dairy products. The drought affected only a portion of the province in the south-western corner. This with the lowered prices of the depression period and the serious situation in Saskatchewan and Alberta resulted in a greatly reduced income for the province.

Between the years 1925 to 1930 the total gross agricultural income of Manitoba was \$790,375,000. Between the years 1931 to 1936 the total gross agricultural income was \$364,484,000, a decline of 54 per cent.

As a result of this lowered income the burden of taxation to provide the public services which Manitoba, as a young province, had undertaken, and to meet the fixed charges of debt, was an unusually heavy one in spite of the most drastic economies in governmental expenditure. To this was added the heavy responsibilities in regard to meeting the unemployment situation and the results of crop failures.

The control and administration of unemployment relief in Manitoba are directly under the Minister of Public Works, and the Deputy Minister of Public Works, Mr. A. McNamara, is also Deputy Minister of Labour and provincial supervisor of relief.

The province appointed a Greater Winnipeg Advisory Relief Commission, with representatives from the city of Winnipeg and from each suburban municipality. Regulations made by this commission are those in use throughout the entire Greater Winnipeg area, and since the provincial supervisor of relief acts as a member of this commission there exists a close relation between the relief methods of Greater Winnipeg and those of the province at large.

Relief in all organized municipal units, including towns, villages and rural municipalities, is administered by each municipality, under the supervision of the provincial supervisor of relief. Municipal councils are required, when provincial aid is needed, to arrange for a special committee to take charge of the administration of relief, known as the Unemployment Relief Committee. This committee is composed of the reeve, the secretary-treasurer, three councillors and two tax-payers, and all applications for relief must be dealt with by this committee.

Unemployment relief, to be paid for from Dominion and provincial funds, must be given only to employable persons and their dependents, relief to persons not normally self-supporting is regarded as a municipal responsibility. Re-registration of all relief recipients is required at least semi-annually under provincial supervision.

The province has issued general regulations in regard to the maximum allowance of relief in rural municipalities. The basis of food allowance is estimated at 40 per cent of the urban food allowance, since rural applicants may have considerable foodstuffs available for their needs. In special cases where a rural family is without food resources, a greater allowance up to \$20 per month may be made.

Shelter is not provided in rural areas, except in occasional cases, but fuel and clothing in addition to food are given when needed.

Medical care and medical supplies and the administration costs of relief are all considered the responsibility of the municipality. Individual members of families, able to earn, are encouraged to exchange labour if possible for necessary supplies.

Relief in the unorganized territory of the province, or in districts which have given up municipal autonomy, and relief for transient families is under the direct administration of the Department of Public Works. Relief in the rural areas has been paid for on a basis of one-third by the Dominion Government, one-third by the province and one-third by the municipality. In the unorganized territory one-half has been paid by the Dominion Government and one-half by the province.

RELIEF IN THE DROUGHT AREA

Up to the year 1936 relief in the drought area of Manitoba had been administered as all other rural relief. But in the fall of 1936, due to the severity of the conditions, the Dominion Government assumed the entire responsibility in all the municipalities and villages of the drought area, but not including incorporated towns and cities within the area. Municipalities and villages appoint a relief committee of three persons, approved of by the province, and the province and the Dominion may also nominate representatives to these committees.

Direct relief includes, food, fuel, shelter if necessary, clothing and clothing materials. Maximum food allowance for one month in rural municipalities and villages in the drought area is \$13.15 for a family of five. Medical supplies, medical care and administration costs are to be provided by the municipality. Relief orders, limited to a list of standard articles, are issued to local merchants.

Relief is to be given only to employable persons and their dependents, suffering from the effects of unemployment or crop failure. Those not self-supporting in normal conditions are held the responsibility of the municipality. All applications must be investigated and application cards signed by the relief committee and reviewed monthly.

Recipients of relief may be required to perform work equal to the value of the relief. The local authorities are authorized to arrange for local improvements for this purpose.

The drought area was divided into two sections according to the severity of conditions and length of the drought. Five municipalities in the southwestern corner of Manitoba, bordering on Saskatchewan, were classified as area A, having suffered from five years of crop failure and also required assistance in order to put in the 1937 crop. The following municipalities composed this area: Albert, Arthur, Brenda, Cameron, Edward, and the towns of Hartney, Melita, and Napinka.

Assistance was also required in the adjoining municipalities of Roblin, Louise, Turtle Mountain, Pipestone, Pembina, Winchester, Whitewater, and Morton. These constituted area B. This area had not suffered so much as area A.

Relief given to these two areas from May 1, 1934, to August 31, 1936, is summarized as follows:—

(1) Direct relief, one-third paid by municipalities and two-thirds by province, of which half was paid out of Dominion grant for direct relief.

(2) Feed and fodder for live stock, one-third by province, two-thirds by municipalities.

(3) Freight on feed and fodder, cost of shipping out settlers and live stock was paid equally by the provincial and Dominion Governments. During this period 3,990 cars of feed and fodder were shipped into this area and 2,800 tons of hay were brought in by trucks.

(4) For the financing of relief the Dominion Government has loaned to the province and the province in turn to the municipalities.

In addition, churches, agricultural societies and the Red Cross were responsible for other assistance, such as vegetables, canned foodstuffs, apples, etc. It is estimated that 180 box cars of food at a conservative valuation of \$90,000 were shipped into the Manitoba drought area in the form of voluntary relief. In all 3,151 families were in need of aid and the area affected was approximately two million acres of land.

In September, 1936, a new agreement was made (September 1, 1936, to March 31, 1937) in regard to drought areas A and B in which the Dominion Government agreed to pay 100 per cent of the cost of relief to persons, and the cost of feed for animals, including freight. The cost of relief for persons was not to exceed \$300,000 and feed for animals not to exceed \$200,000.

This new agreement of 100 per cent cost of relief by the Dominion Government was extended from March 31 to August 31 to apply to persons only.

Loans to municipalities in drought areas A and B, amounting to \$801,316.48, were written off by the province on February 17, 1937.

A fair crop in 1937 in the drought area of Manitoba has relieved the conditions in these municipalities. The total cost of relief in the drought area was \$1,599,902.19. This covers the total period from May 1, 1934, to August 31, 1937.

DOMINION-PROVINCIAL CO-OPERATION 1930-1937

From the beginning, the cost of relief has been divided between the provincial and the Dominion Governments, arrangements being made by a series of yearly agreements between the two governments. The province was not able to meet its relief out of revenue and was only able to finance by borrowing and eventually was forced to appeal to the Dominion Government for loans to meet relief requirements, with the result that public debt of Manitoba absorbs 47 per cent of provincial expenditure¹

The one bright spot in the situation is that Manitoba has emphasized a works program in place of direct relief and \$17,350,000 have been spent on public works and local improvements. The province therefore has something to show for relief, in addition to the satisfaction that those in distress have been cared for.

The agreements between the two Governments have been of three types—those of a general nature, those relating to single unemployed people, and those specially aiming at rural rehabilitation.

AGREEMENTS REGARDING GENERAL RELIEF

The earliest agreements which the province made with the Dominion Government provided that the latter pay one-third of the cost of direct relief in organized municipalities and one-half the cost in unorganized districts. In 1930-31 the Dominion Government agreed to pay \$900,000 for relief works in the city of Winnipeg and in the province, the city, the province and the municipalities

¹A submission by the Government of Manitoba to the Royal Commission on Dominion-Provincial Relations, Winnipeg, 1937. Page 52.

also contributing to the cost of the works. In 1931-32 and 1932-33 the Dominion agreed to support relief works on a basis not to exceed 50 per cent of the cost, unless authorized by the Governor in Council. This agreement was continued in 1933-34.

In 1934-35 the Dominion Government decided to give each province a grant-in-aid rather than a percentage of direct relief costs. This grant was fixed for Manitoba at \$135,000 per month, which amounted to about 20 per cent of the cost. The 1934-35 agreement also provided for a limited amount of relief works. It was also recognized this year that the drought area required some special consideration and the Dominion Government agreed to pay half the cost of—

- (a) Moving settlers from the drought areas into more favourable localities.
- (b) Moving cattle out of the drought areas.
- (c) Moving necessary feed into the drought areas.

In July a new agreement was negotiated, under which the Dominion Government agreed to contribute funds for the completion of works begun under the 1934-35 agreement, and to further works of considerable size. Also the grant-in-aid of \$135,000 was continued, with an increase to \$236,250 for the months of December, 1935, and January, February and March of 1936. The Dominion also agreed to loan money to the province for its share of relief and relief works.

In 1936-37 the Dominion Government continued the grant-in-aid for direct relief and also 50 per cent of the cost of relief projects. On September 1, 1936, the Dominion Government agreed to pay 100 per cent of the cost of relief in the drought areas.

The 1937-38 agreements were five in number, three relating to general relief projects and two with regard to single unemployed. The three general agreements were, —

	Dated
General Works Agreement	June 14, 1937
Greater Winnipeg Sanitary District Agreement.	June 14, 1937
Mining Area Agreement	June 18, 1937

General Works Agreement

Under this agreement the Dominion agreed to contribute to thirteen different specified projects, the maximum Dominion contribution to be \$493,000. These public works included the Trans-Canada and a number of other highways, to each of which the Dominion agreed to contribute 50 per cent of the expenditure. Other works included local highways, drainage projects, bridges, water control works, school for mental defectives, etc., to which the Dominion's contribution was to vary from 20 per cent to 25 per cent of the expenditure.

The Greater Winnipeg Sanitary District

This agreement was first entered into in 1935-36 and provided for Dominion Government assistance in the construction of an intercepting sewer in the city of Winnipeg and the municipality of West Kildonan at an estimated expenditure of \$2,000,000, of which the Dominion's share was not to exceed 40 per cent. This agreement was renewed with certain changes during both of the next two years, being due to expire on March 31, 1938.

Mining Area Agreement

This agreement provides for Dominion assistance to an amount not in excess of \$226,000 towards the construction of roads and other projects for the development of mining areas of the province, subject to the contribution by the province of an amount equal to at least one-half that of the Dominion.

AGREEMENTS RE SINGLE UNEMPLOYED

Relief Commission—Unemployed Single Men

By 1932-33 the problem of unemployed single men had become very acute and the Manitoba Government appointed a commission, known as the Relief Commission—Unemployed Single Men, by an agreement with the Dominion Government, in order to make provision for unemployed, homeless, single men, many of whom had been travelling back and forth across Canada looking for work and finding none. It was felt that some special provision had to be made to meet this situation.

Division of the cost was made on the basis of 50 per cent grant-in-aid from the Dominion Government and 50 per cent provincial direct relief. The commission acts as agent for cities and municipalities and, in the case of men of no residence qualifications, bears 100 per cent of the cost.

There were three phases of the work of this commission.

(1) *Care of Homeless Men in Cities.*—Homeless men were cared for in the cities of Winnipeg and Brandon by the issuing of meal tickets and shelter vouchers. Two dining halls were operated in Winnipeg and one in Brandon. These were for men placed in category "C" or lower, upon medical examination.

(2) *Provincial Works Projects.*—These projects included the establishment of three forestry camps, where road work and general forestry work was done; three camps with a capacity of 450 men, engaged in certain drainage projects northwest of Winnipeg; one camp at St. Francois Xavier to make a diversion channel for the Assiniboine river to protect the above town from the high waters of spring floods; and the continuation of work on the Mafeking-The Pas highway, which had begun in July, 1936.

(3) *Farm Improvement and Employment Plan.*—Under this plan, begun in 1932, single men from urban centres were placed on farms and received a bonus of \$5 per month from the Dominion Government.

On October 1, 1936, the plan was extended to include destitute single men from rural districts as well as men from urban centres. It also included young women. Under the revised plan each worker received a sum of \$5 per month and a bonus of \$2.50 per month if he were still employed by March 31, 1937. Farmers were also paid \$5 per month for board and shelter of each worker. The plan was extended later to include the month of April when the worker was paid \$7.50, but no payment was made to the farmer. The gratuity payment to the worker was made conditional on a contract between the worker and the employer that the worker would remain during the summer months at regular wages. This plan is being operated during the winter of 1937-38.

The following figures show the number placed under the Farm Employment Plan:—

	1932-33	1933-34	1934-35	1935-36	1936-37
Placed	2,908	4,635	5,172	5,541	9,509
Known to have remained in farm employment after Plan closed . .	846	1,700	2,100	1,853	2,724

A similar plan is being put in operation for the winter of 1937-38.

The total expenditure from November, 1932, to April 30, 1937, for homeless single men, under the Relief Commission, including those cared for in cities, in work camps and on farms, was \$3,922,255.92, of which the shares of the three governments were:—

Dominion	\$2,174,217.91
Provincial	1,408,040.40
Municipal	339,997.61

Youth Training Agreement

Under the Dominion-Provincial Youth Training Act of 1937, the Dominion Government agreed to pay to the province an amount not in excess of \$100,000 on condition of an equal amount being voted by the province to finance certain training courses and certain work projects designed to give practical training as well as employment for unemployed young men and women between the ages of 18 and 30.

The projects included the following:—

Schedule A. Forest conservation training project	
Estimated total cost.	\$94,000
Schedule B. Learnership project	
Estimated total cost.	10,000
Schedule C. Domestic training school	
Estimated total cost.	11,000
Schedule D. Specialized employment and placement service	
Estimated total cost.	8,000
Schedule E. Urban occupational training	
Estimated total cost.	35,000
Schedule F. Agricultural training for rural young people	
Estimated total cost.	31,000
Schedule G. University agricultural certificate course	
Estimated total cost.	4,500

The remaining agreement made with the Dominion Government in 1937-38 with reference to young men was a continuation of the former agreement on farm improvement and employment, which is described on page 65.

RELIEF IN UNORGANIZED TERRITORIES

Relief in unorganized territories and to transient families was looked after by the Relief Commission. During the months from May, 1936, to April, 1937, an average of 3,334 individuals per month were cared for at a cost of \$2.67 per individual. In 1936, seed grain was given to many farmers in the unorganized territories. An arrangement was made whereby the relief recipients could work out the costs of their relief in building roads and making other necessary improvements in these new areas. The response to the call to work has been satisfactory.

RURAL REHABILITATION COMMISSION

In 1932, the Manitoba Rural Rehabilitation Commission was organized by an agreement with the Dominion Government, in order to move families with farming experience from urban centres back to the land. This commission has co-operated with the Canadian Land Settlement Association, the Soldiers' Settlement Board, the Canada Colonization Association and the Departments of Agriculture and of Public Works of the Manitoba Government.

The Dominion agreed to pay one-third of the costs, the province and municipality the remaining two-thirds.

There were several agreements with the Dominion Government. The original agreement of May 1, 1932, provided for a total expenditure per family of \$600 to be spent over a two-year period. In May, 1934, the \$600 agreement was continued with an additional \$100 for a third year. In 1935 to February, 1936, an additional \$80 was agreed upon for the fourth year. On August 7, 1936, a new agreement provided for an expenditure of \$1,000 over a four-year period on subsistence, stock and equipment.

Maximum Expenditure first and second year.....	\$ 820
“ “ third year	100
“ “ fourth year	80
	<u>\$1,000</u>

The original agreements, prior to 1936, were to be carried on as formerly arranged with subsistence allowance as follows:—

Third year of settlement.....	\$100
Fourth year of settlement.....	80
Fifth year of settlement.....	70

On November 3, 1937, provision was made for a sixth year of settlement of \$70.

Families settled under the rural rehabilitation plan from May, 1932, to October, 1937, were as follows:—

Families	1,121	Individuals	5,456
Families returned ...	262	Individuals	1,173
	<u>859</u>		<u>4,283</u>

Of the families who returned, 146 were placed on direct relief and the remaining 116 were not on relief.

The total cost of rural rehabilitation was as follows:—

Dominion	\$209,620 75
Provincial	330,558 59
Municipal	290,792 32
Total	<u>\$830,971 66</u>

Manitoba's relief problem, as previously pointed out, has been centred chiefly in Winnipeg and adjacent suburban municipalities, but the extent of the problem for the whole province is shown by the following figures:—

INDIVIDUALS ON RELIEF

UNEMPLOYMENT RELIEF, OCTOBER 1, 1930, TO NOVEMBER 30, 1937

Lowest number on relief, 34,450—month of October, 1931
or 4.9 per cent of total population

Highest number on relief, 115,155—month of March, 1937
or 16.2 per cent of total population

Average number of individuals receiving relief:

Year ended	March 31,	1932.....	Individuals
“ “	“	1933.....	49,927
“ “	“	1934.....	59,663
“ “	“	1935.....	81,064
“ “	“	1936.....	78,636
“ “	“	1937.....	84,089
			<u>88,285</u>

TABLE IX

GRAND TOTAL EXPENDITURES IN MANITOBA—OCTOBER 1, 1930 TO NOVEMBER 30, 1937 (COMMITMENTS)—
86 MONTHS UNEMPLOYMENT RELIEF INCLUDING WORKS

Statement showing Total Cost Relief and Relief Works, October 1st, 1930 to November 30th, 1937

	Total Expenditure	Dominion	Province	Municipal
	\$	\$	\$	\$
Relief works.....	17,878,244 69	7,603,778 97	7,140,694 01	3,133,771 77
Direct relief.....	36,031,682 45	11,550,989 49	11,834,522 66	12,646,170 30
Rural rehabilitation.....	830,971 66	209,620 75	330,558 59	290,792 32
Single men's commission.....	4,342,038 52	2,422,209 24	1,524,899 17	394,930 11
	<u>59,082,937 32</u>	<u>21,786,598 45</u>	<u>20,830,674 43</u>	<u>16,465,664 44</u>

The combined total paid out as its share and in loans by the province during the period of eighty-six months from October 1, 1930, was:—

Share assumed by province.....	\$20,830,674 43
Loaned to municipalities.....	5,297,975 39
Combined total paid and loaned.....	\$26,128,649 83

The province has borrowed for the purpose of paying its share or loaning to the municipalities as follows:—

—	Total Borrowed From Dominion	Borrowed From Other Sources	Total Borrowed	Loaned to Municipalities
	\$	\$	\$	\$
Relief works.....	7,933,341 32	951,472 87	8,884,814 19	2,030,981 74
Direct relief.....	12,223,313 60	3,647,278 56	15,870,592 16	2,461,843 13
For drought area.....	¹ 899,615 34	5,000 00	904,615 34	² 805,150 52
	21,056,270 26	4,603,751 43	25,660,021 69	5,297,975 39

¹ Dominion Government to write off \$570,078.48

² Written off by province under o/c 175-37 \$800,316.48

The fundamental policy which has been followed as closely as possible during the past eight years in Manitoba in respect to relief has been that, wherever it has been feasible, work has been provided for the relief recipients. Mr. A. McNamara, Deputy Minister of Public Works and Labour, states that men prefer work to relief. To illustrate this he stated that when an announcement was made in Winnipeg that 200 men were needed for digging sewer trenches, some 3,500 men applied for the 200 jobs. He said, "I am convinced that the desire for work is still here, but, he added, "the longer men are on relief the weaker becomes the desire." Of the total expenditures of \$59,082,937.32 for relief and relief works from October 1, 1930, to November 30, 1937, some \$17,878,244.69 was spent in relief works. This now represents a real asset to the province.

Following is a summary of the principal relief works carried on in Manitoba during these difficult years:—

Trans-Canada highway, 166 miles..	\$1,657,000
Provincial highway, 1,020 miles (construction or improvement)..	1,426,000
Water mains and sewers..	2,900,000
Transmission lines..	280,500
Six bridges and subways (large projects)..	2,100,700
Water control..	83,000
New science building..	633,410
Auditorium..	1,086,300
Fish hatcheries..	25,000
Drainage..	87,500
Alterations—gaol..	28,000
Brandon mental hospital..	350,000
Mining areas..	683,000
City baths and relief buildings..	40,500
Public school—Flin Flon..	23,930
Children's hospital..	40,050
School for mental defectives..	40,000
(The above works were done under the direct control and supervision of the provincial Government engineers).	
Grants to municipalities for general road work, brushing, etc., 160 municipalities benefited..	4,700,000

As one studies the methods of relief administration which have been followed in Manitoba he is impressed by the efficiency which has marked that administration as well as by the sympathetic understanding of the problem on the part of those charged with the responsibility.

It is interesting to note how quickly relief costs fell off in the drought areas. In 1937 a fair crop was harvested after several years of almost complete crop

failure. In some of these rural municipalities relief costs which had been running at the rate of \$5,000 per month immediately dropped to about \$400 per month. It is still fundamentally true that man would rather eat bread that he has himself earned than accept it from another. The farmers of this area were the first to offer to ship in carloads of vegetables to their less fortunate neighbours in Saskatchewan. The fine spirit of generosity and unselfishness which characterizes mankind could not be stamped out by six successive years of drought.¹

Manitoba has already taken a big step towards recovery. In 1933 the value of all the field crops of the province was \$35,650,000. In 1936 it had increased to \$51,000,000, and in 1937 to approximately \$90,000,000. Of wheat alone, in 1937 Manitoba produced 53,000,000 bushels on 2,872,000 cultivated acres, an average of 18.1 bushels per acre. This crop was a great stimulus to business generally. Building permits in 1937 in Greater Winnipeg increased in value by 50 per cent over the preceding year. Collections of both principal and interest were greater than for many years past. Farm lands are again being purchased, frequently by farmers for their sons showing that the farmers themselves have not lost faith in agriculture.

It is amazing how quickly a farmer recovers when the land receives the necessary rainfall. Municipalities in the southwest corner of Manitoba (the drought area) that had suffered several years of drought and were receiving \$5,000 per month relief practically went off relief with the 1937 crop, relief being reduced to \$400 per month. A mortgage company furnished the following information regarding farms in which it is interested in the drought area of Manitoba.

	Paid on account		Paid on account
(a) $\frac{1}{4}$ Section 1933.....	\$ 85 00	(b) $\frac{1}{2}$ Section 1933.....	.....
1934.....	.....	1934.....	.....
1935.....	.....	1935.....	\$ 138 00
1936.....	.....	1936.....	99 00
1937.....	405 00	1937.....	465 00
(c) 1 Section 1933.....	.....	(d) $\frac{3}{4}$ Section 1933.....	159 00
1934.....	.....	1934.....	.....
1935.....	30 00	1935.....	.....
1936.....	.....	1936.....	93 00
1937.....	1,080 00	1937.....	953 00

In one area this mortgage company reported that 55 loans were paid up in full as the result of the 1937 crop, and in all areas interest was paid in full in most cases.

It is safe to say that when good crops return to Saskatchewan, business will become normal in Manitoba. The handling of the Saskatchewan crop means employment in Manitoba. The return of purchasing power to Saskatchewan means business and employment for Manitoba. Manitoba's relief problem will then be reduced to a minimum.

¹Much of the information and statistics provided above are from the "Review of Unemployment and Relief" prepared by the Department of Public Works and Labour, Winnipeg, Manitoba, November 30, 1937.

Section V

ALBERTA

The province of Alberta has a somewhat different economy from that of either Saskatchewan or Manitoba. In addition to a climate that is less severe and more varied than that of the other provinces—a climate that lends itself, over a large part of the province, to mixed farming and stock-raising—it has abundant resources in coal and oil, with somewhat extensive stands of timber as well.

“In addition to the advantage afforded by a certain degree of diversification in the agricultural industry, Alberta has the benefit of natural resources which are richer and more varied than those of the other Prairie Provinces. Foremost are the huge coal reserves; oil and natural gas are also of importance. Finally the availability of cheap power from water, coal and gas gives a sound foundation for the development of secondary industries engaged in processing agricultural and other products.”¹

During the greater part of the drought period Alberta suffered much less severely than Manitoba or Saskatchewan. In 1936 and more especially in 1937, however, the drought area, formerly restricted to a relatively small district in the southeastern corner of the province, extended northward and somewhat westward until it included the greater part of the southern wheat land. (Map XV). More serious even than the wheat failure was the loss of feed for the ranches of southern Alberta.

But in spite of the adverse weather conditions over such a considerable portion of the province, Alberta in 1937 produced 176,650,000 bushels of grain of all kinds to the value of \$110,465,000, an increase of 27 millions of dollars over the previous year. The returns from the sale of cattle in the same year were some two and a half millions of dollars greater than in 1936, while the oil fields produced a revenue of \$4,900,000, nearly double that of 1936.

It is contended, however, by provincial and municipal authorities that in point of actual need, Alberta is second only to Saskatchewan. Conditions in the drought and marginal areas are identical, the only difference being in the extent of these areas. Consequently, relief has been and still continues to constitute a major problem of the governing bodies of the province.

THE RELIEF ORGANIZATION

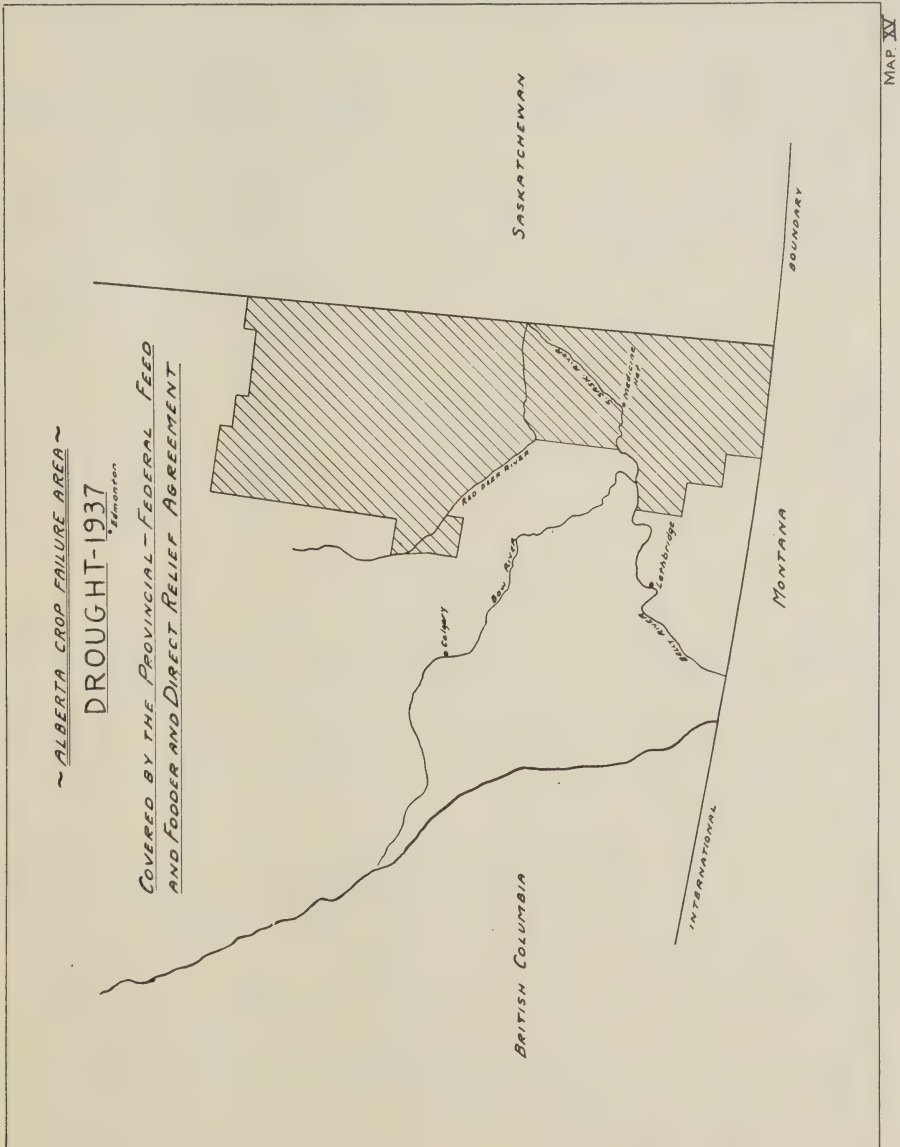
In Alberta, as in Saskatchewan, the federal Government has, for the present year, assumed 100 per cent responsibility for the drought area, which in this province comprises 52 municipalities and local improvement districts. The actual administration of direct relief in these areas, however, is the responsibility of the provincial Government and follows the practice generally prevailing in the non-drought areas. It is stipulated, however, in the agreement with Ottawa, that the direct relief distributed in the drought areas shall not be on a higher scale than the general relief scale followed by the provincial Government in other similarly necessitous rural areas of the province.

For relief purposes in the areas outside of the above-mentioned 52 municipal units, the province receives from the federal Government a monthly grant-in-aid of \$125,000. This amount it may use as it deems necessary to supplement its own expenditures for direct relief. This relief, in municipal districts, villages, towns and cities is administered directly by the council of the municipality concerned, while in the local improvement districts it is administered by the various

¹Bank of Canada Report on the Financial Position of Alberta, pages 2 and 3.

detachments of the R.C.M.P. These officials send to the Bureau of Relief and Public Welfare at Edmonton a complete list of recipients, together with the amount of relief they are to receive. The bureau may revise the total amount asked for but does not interfere with the allotted amounts for each individual recipient. Any reduction in the amount asked for by the administering body may be adjusted among the recipients as the council deems wise.

In general, outside of what is known as the "federal area," the financial responsibility for relief is shared by the provincial Government and the municipalities and local improvement districts in the ratio of 61 per cent by the senior government and 39 per cent by the local bodies. The province is, assisted in the payment of its share by the monthly grant-in-aid from the Dominion Government, referred to above. It is claimed by the provincial authorities that the



knowledge that 39 per cent of the total expenditures is being charged back to the municipal bodies acts as a check on the possible listing as "indigents" of some who might, if compelled to do so, be able to look after themselves.

The province is divided into four zones, each zone under a supervisor, who resides in Edmonton. The supervisor reviews all applications in his particular zone and advises the issuing authority what amount of relief shall be granted by the senior governments. Under this set-up the bureau has at all times a complete knowledge of what relief is being issued in any particular municipality.

In the five major cities of Alberta—Edmonton, Calgary, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat and Drumheller—the administration of relief rests entirely with the local authorities. A lump sum is granted monthly to each of these cities and they may use this amount as they desire for relief purposes. Thus the federal and provincial authorities exercise no control whatever over the relief administration in these cities beyond limiting the amount of their participation in the relief costs.

The provincial Government also carries the entire responsibility for transients and for those who cannot establish residence in any municipality. Relief for single homeless men is administered by the Single Unemployment Relief Commission.

The total number on rural relief each year since 1931 is shown in the table below, which has been furnished by the Bureau of Relief and Public Welfare. This includes all villages and towns and the cities of Red Deer and Wetaskiwin.

Month	Heads of Families	Number of Dependents	Single Men and/or Women
Dec. 1931.....	2,272	10,011	372
1932.....	2,473	10,426	395
1933.....	4,588	18,115	809
1934.....	4,986	19,001	726
1935.....	13,906	51,662	2,564
1936.....	8,885	32,496	2,177
Nov. 1937.....	7,153	27,020	1,826

RELIEF SCHEDULES

In the five major cities to which definite grants are made, the local authorities themselves determine their own schedule of relief. For example, the schedule in the city of Edmonton ranges from an allowance for full maintenance, including food, fuel, shelter, clothing, etc., of \$16.88 per month for a single person and \$27.69 for man and wife, to \$65.56 per month for a man and wife and five children and \$92.72 for a man and wife and 10 children. The city of Calgary allows \$29.30 per month for a man and wife and \$66.35 for a man and wife and 5 children.

In the remaining part of the province, however, relief is granted according to a basic scale drawn up by an advisory committee. Each applicant is dealt with individually and amounts of relief are determined according to individual needs. Even the basic scales, however, may vary in different parts of the province, according to local needs and resources.

Applications for direct relief must be investigated by the municipal authorities and approved by a representative of the Government or by the R.C.M.P. acting as government agents for this purpose. All applications for relief must be approved by the Bureau of Relief and Public Welfare upon individual recommendations of the council of the municipality concerned before vouchers are issued or payments made.

The following schedules illustrate the basis of grants for farmers and for non-farmers respectively in the drought areas:—

FARMERS

Food—

Single persons.. . . .	\$5.00 per month
Man and wife (or two adults).. . . .	7.50 “ “
Each child.. . . .	2.00 “ “

Fuel—

Basic rate 1 ton per month. This has to be altered according to weather conditions.

Clothing—

Necessary supply after investigation. In any case not to exceed \$6.25 per person, per season, when purchased locally. If purchased through the Edmonton Clothing Depot, \$5 per person per season.

NON-FARMERS

Food—

Single persons.. . . .	8.36 “ “
Man and wife (or two adults).. . . .	12.25 “ “
Man and wife and 1 child.. . . .	16.95 “ “
Man and wife and 2 children.. . . .	21.39 “ “
Man and wife and 3 children.. . . .	25.38 “ “
Man and wife and 4 children.. . . .	29.47 “ “
Man and wife and 5 children.. . . .	33.32 “ “
Man and wife and 6 children.. . . .	38.35 “ “
Each additional child.. . . .	4.05 “ “

Fuel and Clothing schedule same as in Farmer schedule above.

Rent.—No specific scale but each application dealt with on its own merits and rent issued only when justification shown.

TYPES OF RELIEF ASSISTANCE

It is intended here merely to indicate briefly the various forms which the administration of rural relief in Alberta has followed. The general picture is similar to that of the other prairie provinces but local conditions have given rise to some differences in detail.

MAINTENANCE RELIEF

As indicated above, the federal Government has, for the year 1937-38 assumed responsibility for the area in which there is 100 per cent crop failure, just as it has done in the province of Saskatchewan. In this area complete maintenance is granted. The provincial government itself assumes the responsibility for the remainder of its areas. For purposes of administration it has divided the whole province into four zones. Zone 1 comprises the southeastern part of the province which has shared with Saskatchewan the severity of the drought for a number of years past. The 1937 report of the commissioner states, regarding this area, “In addition to food, fuel, clothing and shelter, it was necessary to make extensive purchases of potatoes and vegetables which were distributed to the relief recipients in this area by this bureau. In addition to the potatoes and vegetables purchased, the inter-church committee of Eastern Canada came to the assistance of the Western Provinces and sent many carloads of donated fruit and vegetables through the inter-church committee which was organized at Calgary.

The Canadian Red Cross Society also gave a large contribution of blankets, comforters and sheeting which helped to alleviate a very distressing situation in regard to household necessities.”

Reference must also be made to the generous contributions made to Alberta sufferers by the fruit farmers of British Columbia, who freely donated many carloads of apples. The more favoured parts of Alberta itself also sent carloads of vegetables into the stricken areas. As already pointed out in Section III

the drought area also shared in the distribution of the apples, fish, cheese and beans sent out by the federal Government relief cars last fall.

The conditions in zone 2, which lies west of zone 1, were not very different from those in zone 1, except that not all of this area was entirely dried out. Twenty municipalities of this zone were taken over in 1937, along with the whole of zone 1, by the Dominion Government. Relief applications here have increased, due to total crop failures in the wheat areas and to lack of employment in the industrial areas, which include the Drumheller Valley, Crow's Nest Pass, Hardieville and Shaughnessy mining areas. Provision also had to be made for a large number of transient families in the city of Calgary. "These people make a practice of moving into the cities during the winter months chiefly for the purpose of obtaining a higher scale of relief. Owing to having established no permanent residence on account of the fact that they have been moving around from place to place most of their lives, these cases have had to be dealt with as transients, and it has been found exceedingly difficult to obtain quarters for them in the rural districts."(*)

The care of transients is a serious problem in Alberta. From April 1, 1937, until December 31, of the same year the province cared for 4,384 transients at a cost of \$252,410.

Zone 3 lies north of zones 1 and 2 and takes in only a small part of the grain belt of the province. "The central area is a mixed farming district and a considerable portion of it is settled by homesteaders who have only a small amount of land under cultivation and very little live stock. The continued poor returns from agricultural enterprises had a discouraging and demoralizing effect on many, with the result that some gave up hope entirely and sought Government assistance, and some moved off their farms and came to the city with the idea of obtaining relief in the city. Of these, many required assistance before they could gain residence qualifications in the city. This resulted in considerably heavier costs than would otherwise have been required until the necessary adjustments were made."(*)

This zone also included a number who had been moved from the drought areas of the south under the farm settlement scheme and who were still not self-supporting and so had to be placed again on direct relief.

Zone 4 comprises homesteads and thinly settled areas almost entirely. Most of these people had been living a hand-to-mouth existence for many years and, with poorer than normal conditions, were forced to apply for relief. Here also a considerable amount of assistance had to be given to new settlers from the drought areas.

TIE AND TIMBER PROJECTS

Under the direction of the relief commissioner work in the form of cutting ties and timber was planned to assist needy settlers in the timbered areas who would otherwise have been compelled to apply for relief. It placed the authorities in a position of being able to offer employment to those making application for relief, who in some cases refused employment and did not request further assistance. In the major part of the territory in which these activities were initiated, relief was reduced to a minimum and, in some areas, was eliminated entirely, except for indigent and unemployable persons. Assistance was provided in all for 468 families by this method during the relief year 1936-37.

The full cost of this type of assistance was recovered from the sale of timber, ties, etc., without hurtful competition with the local lumber industry of Alberta.

*Report of Commissioner of Relief and Public Welfare, Alberta, fiscal year ending March 31, 1937, page 25.

FARM HELP UNEMPLOYMENT RELIEF PLAN

The farm help unemployment plan has been in use in other provinces under arrangement with the Dominion Government by which single unemployed men were sent out to farmers who were financially unable to hire help or who were willing to take a man over and above their normal labour requirements. The man was paid \$5 per month with a bonus of \$2.50 per month if he stayed until the termination of the scheme at the end of April. The farmer also received \$5 per month towards the man's board.

The number placed under this scheme in Alberta from 1932 down to the present time, with the cost thereof, is shown in the following table:

TABLE X

GOVERNMENT OF THE PROVINCE OF ALBERTA—FARM HELP UNEMPLOYMENT RELIEF PLAN

Year	No. of Place- ments ¹	Cost ²	Remarks
1932-33.....	1,276	\$ 5,659 90	Man was paid \$5.00 per month. Dominion contributed 100 per cent of this.
1933-34.....	1,509	11,118 07	Man was paid \$5.00 per month. Dominion paid 100 per cent of this and 50 per cent transportation costs.
1934-35.....	1,662	11,724 58	Man was paid \$5.00 per month. Dominion paid 100 per cent of this and 50 per cent transportation costs.
1935-36.....	2,948	42,826 19	Man was paid \$5.00 per month, \$7.00, \$8.00, \$10.00 subsequent months. Dominion paid \$5.00 per month only and 50 per cent transportation costs. Province absorbed difference.
1936-37.....	6,095	171,809 58	Man was paid \$5.00 per month and bonus of \$2.50 if he stayed to end of period. Farmer was paid \$5.00 per month. Dominion contributed 50 per cent of man's wages and bonus, farmer's remuneration, transportation and man's clothing up to value of \$3.00.
Nov. 1st, 1937-Feb. 26th, 1938	5,222	131,213 00	

¹ The figure in this column is the total number of placements during the year—some of the men who left the first farmer were given second chances—The 1936-37 placements is given as 6,095, but the actual number of unemployed men sent out that year was 4,731. The actual numbers sent out in previous years would be approximately the same proportion.

² This figure is wages and farmers' bonus only, and does not include cost of clothing and transportation. Clothing costs amount to approximately \$3.00 per man, and transportation 80 cents per man.

MOVEMENT OF SETTLERS FROM DROUGHT AREAS

Under an agreement made by the province with the Dominion Government, an arrangement was made with the railways—the Canadian Pacific Railway, the Canadian National Railway and the Northern Alberta Railway—for a special tariff of approximately two-thirds of the normal rate for the removal of farmers on poor lands to more favourable areas.

The applicant was required to be a bona fide farmer, "resident on unsuitable or unproductive land within the province of Alberta as at April 1, 1936, and who, by reason of the unproductiveness of the land, found it impossible to make a living at that location, and who was without means to provide transportation from his own resources."¹ He was required to have arranged for the purchase or rental of suitable land or to have filed on a homestead. If leasing land, he was required to have signed a lease for at least two years.

The land to which the settler was moving was subject to inspection by a district agriculturist or fieldman in order to make sure that it was of the sort

¹ Report of Commissioner of Relief and Public Welfare, Alberta, fiscal year ending March 31st, 1937.

on which the settler might be expected to become self-supporting within a reasonable time. The application had to be passed by a board consisting of a representative of the federal Government, a representative of the provincial Department of Agriculture and the Commissioner of Relief and Public Welfare, before being finally disposed of.

Supplementary to the actual removal of farmers, and part of the agreement with Ottawa, were arrangements providing for various additional activities as rehabilitation measures. Under this plan approximately \$136,000 was spent in the construction of roads and drains in newly settled areas.

As a re-establishment measure this program was most successful, providing funds which enabled settlers who had been compelled to obtain relief to purchase equipment, etc., and provide for themselves. In one area, some 37 relief recipients procured fishing equipment, enabling them to obtain gainful employment and provide for themselves. In other areas, trappers were enabled to re-equip themselves and carry on their vocation, while again in other districts, men who had been in receipt of relief, purchased necessary farming equipment and work horses. In all, some 2,465 persons who appeared on the relief rolls were provided with gainful employment.

The total expenditures for these removal and rehabilitation measures, incurred and estimated, up to March 31, 1938, amounted to \$652,000, of which the Dominion Government assumed as its share \$221,000, the provincial Government, \$306,000 and the municipalities concerned, \$125,000.¹

MEDICAL SERVICES AND HOSPITALIZATION

The people in the dried-out areas of Alberta in need of medical assistance have been well cared for by means of the medical services and hospitalization provided by the Bureau of Relief and Public Welfare. Arrangements were made for paying medical men for their services and also for hospital bills incurred by those for whom the province is liable, as well as payments to druggists for various prescriptions ordered by medical men for indigent patients. In certain areas a number of doctors are under contract to the government where it is found more expedient to take care of the people in this way. The Bureau of Relief and Public Welfare in its annual report paid a special tribute to the generosity and co-operation of the medical men throughout the province who did a large amount of work gratis to people in local improvement districts.

The medical care and hospitalization of needy settlers in the municipal districts is the responsibility of the municipality alone, while the responsibility for the needy sick in the local improvement districts and for transients rests upon the provincial Government.

MISCELLANEOUS

Other types of assistance given by the province in these years of depression have been (1) Relief Camps, for single unemployed men, amounting in the fiscal year ending March 31, 1937, to \$444,605, of which the Dominion Government paid \$96,056, and providing accommodation for some 2,233 men. (2) Community Kitchens and Hostels in the larger cities and (3) Clothing Depot at Edmonton from which clothing has been supplied to all married relief recipients and their families who are provincial charges and also to municipal charges other than those cared for by the five major cities.

EXPENDITURES

According to the figures furnished by the Bureau of Relief and Public Welfare, the total cost of all kinds of relief, from April 1, 1930, to March 31, 1938, a period of eight years, will have amounted to net expenditures of \$54,444,000. This amount has been divided among the three governing bodies

¹ Figures supplied by the Bureau of Relief and Public Welfare, Alberta.

in the following proportions: Dominion Government, 24·12 per cent, provincial Government, 51·57 per cent and the municipalities, 24·31 per cent.

In Table XI is shown a classified recapitulation of the expenditures.

TABLE XI

RELIEF CLASSIFICATION

Relief Expenditures in Alberta (incurred and anticipated)—From April 1, 1930, to March 31, 1938

(Thousands of Dollars)

—	Gross Expenditures	Repayments	Net Expenditures	Dominion Share	Provincial Share	Municipal Share
RECAPITULATION—						
Direct relief.....	37,546	161	37,385	10,409	16,739	10,237
Relief work.....	11,779	28	11,751	4,371	5,879	1,501
Agricultural relief.....	10,324	2,428	7,896	2,568	4,503	825
Unemployment relief administration..	1,633	3	1,630	—	955	675
	61,282	2,620	58,662	17,348	28,076	13,238

In addition to the foregoing the provincial Government through the Department of Education provided, during the year 1937, equalization grants to the amount of \$49,286.40 to school districts in the drought area. The figures for the years previous are not at present available.

SPECIAL MUNICIPAL AREAS ACT—PROVINCE OF ALBERTA

It will be seen from the above that the provincial government has been keenly alive to the situation and anxious to place the farmers in the areas subject to drought conditions in such a position that they will be able to carry on under their own resources even in dry years.

An important work is being carried on in Alberta under the Special Municipal Areas Board, of which Mr. O. S. Longman of Edmonton is the chairman. The following information, furnished by Mr. Longman, gives some idea of the nature of the work of this board.

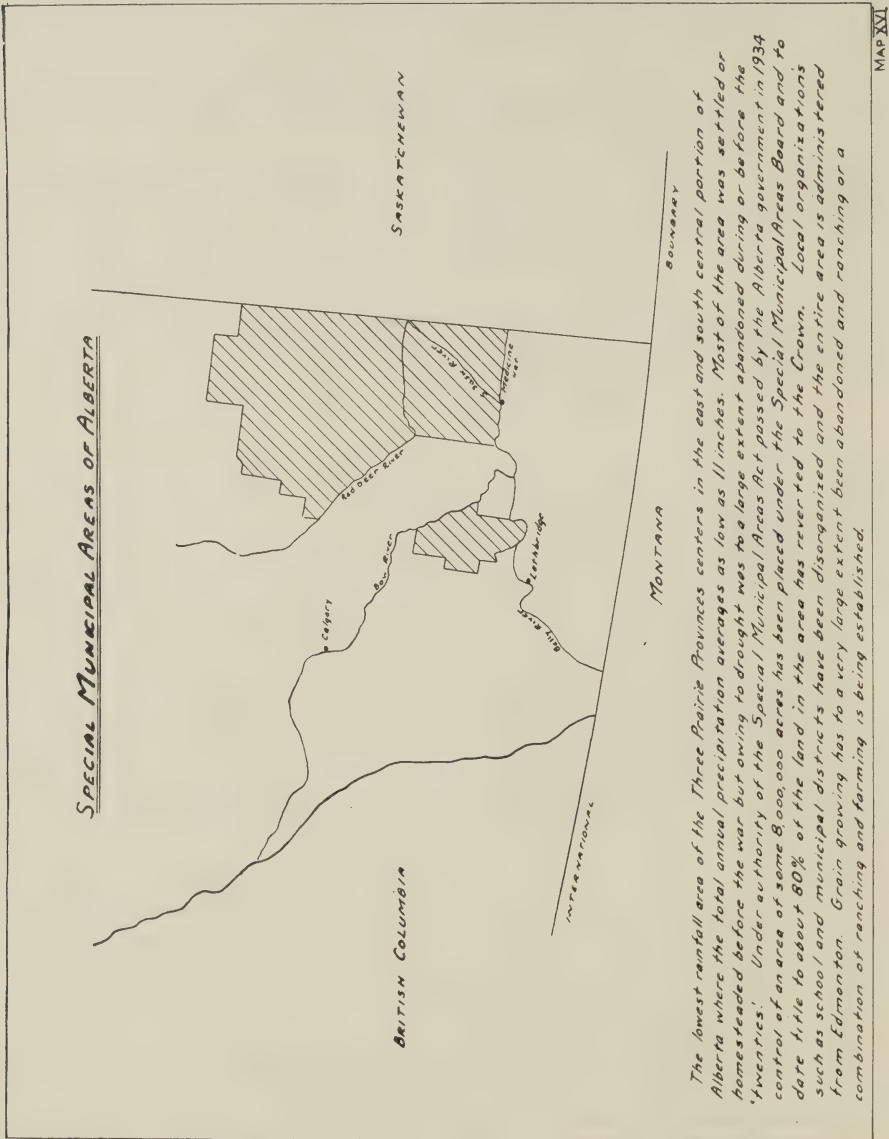
In 1925, owing to the conditions obtaining in the eastern part of Alberta where the situation was very acute as the result of a number of years of drought, the provincial Government endeavoured to evolve a scheme for the re-establishment of farmers in that portion of the province. It was felt that by encouraging the extension of ranching operations or the combination of ranching and farming rather than straight grain growing, the residents remaining in the drought area might be able to gain a greater degree of security. (Map XVI.)

The area selected for the experiment was that portion of the province east of township 10, lying between the Red Deer and Saskatchewan rivers, now known as the Tilley East area. In order to bring about the conditions desired it was found necessary to seek the co-operation of the Dominion Government with respect to vacant Crown lands, as it was thought desirable that these lands, as well as those taken under tax recovery proceedings, must necessarily be brought under one controlling authority.

A joint commission was appointed by the Alberta and Dominion Governments to make a report covering charges against the lands and the indebtedness of various municipalities and school districts and other obligations of various parties interested in the area.

This commission submitted its report in 1926 and it was accepted in its entirety by both Governments, resulting in legislation being enacted by the provincial Government providing for the appointment of a board to administer the area. The Dominion Government expressed the opinion that it would seem preferable for the province to have sole control and the Act was amended to carry out this idea. As a result of the Dominion Government withdrawing from the scheme and for other reasons it was not until July of 1929 that an Order

in Council was passed appointing the first Tilley East Area Board. Similar conditions to those in the Tilley East Area also existed in the area north of the Red Deer river and in 1931 Mr. O. S. Longman was delegated by the provincial government to make a thorough investigation into conditions prevailing in the area now designated as the Berry Creek Area, and to make recommendations



to the Government with respect to the rehabilitation of this area. In 1932 the Tilley East Area Act was amended to include the Berry Creek Area and an administrator was appointed to administer the area. A number of municipal districts were disorganized and a policy somewhat similar to that in operation in the Tilley East Area was initiated in the Berry Creek Area.

In 1934 the Tilley East and Berry Creek Area Act was amended to provide for the inclusion under the Act of any area within the province which was declared by Order in Council to be unfit for agricultural purposes. Under this legislation the areas now known as Sounding Creek, Sullivan Lake and Neutral Hills were declared to be Special Municipal Areas and are now administered under the Act. In 1937 the Bow West Special Area was established, including municipal units 96 and 127.

The Special Municipal Areas Act, briefly, makes provision for the following:

1. Permits by Order in Council the bringing of any area considered unfit for agricultural purposes under the supervision of the Act.
2. That the Lieutenant-Governor in Council has power to appoint a board for the purpose of administering the Act.
3. The Board has power under the Act,
 - (a) To lease public lands and establish rental charges;
 - (b) To exchange lands with persons or corporations;
 - (c) To arrange for the compromise of arrears of taxes;
 - (d) To establish community grazing areas;
 - (e) To accept moneys from rentals and to expand same for the betterment of the area;
 - (f) To make provision or arrangements with respect to debenture indebtedness of school districts within the area;
 - (g) In the case of disorganized municipalities to exercise all the duties and rights conferred by law upon a municipal council.

The Act further provides.—

4. That the board may seize live stock or chattels in payment of rentals or other moneys due the board.
5. That all provincial lands unfit for agricultural purposes within the area may come under the control of the board.
6. That the Minister of Municipal Affairs may accept transfer of any lands in the name of the Crown within the area, and such lands shall be public lands.
7. That lands may be acquired under tax recovery act by transfer of title or by gift.
8. That lands finally acquired within the area shall not be liable to assessment or taxation, and the taxes due at the time of acquisition or acceptance of transfer shall be cancelled.

In brief, the Act provides for the withdrawing of land from assessment and automatically cancelling taxation and sub-dividing land so acquired into farm units, leases or community grazing pastures on a rental basis exclusive of taxes.

The municipal areas under present administration include over 360 townships, representing over 8,400,000 acres of land. It is estimated that in addition approximately 1,000,000 acres might justifiably be included within the area. The above area has been organized into large municipal units, and each large unit is in charge of a municipal secretary responsible to the Department of Municipal Affairs, and municipal fieldmen, responsible to the board and assisted by local committees which act in an advisory capacity to the fieldmen, form the administrative set-up for the areas. The extent of the duties of municipal officials is determined by the percentage of title lands within the areas.



ALBERTA COMMUNITY STOCKWATERING DAMS

Constructed by the Special Municipal Areas Board under the P.F.R.A. program.

In the areas, grazing lands are leased at a rate of $2\frac{1}{2}$ cents per acre and land suitable for cropping pays a rental of one-sixth share of the crop annually. Once the land comes under the control of the board it is considered as public land and is not offered for sale, and settlement on same is not permitted by individuals coming from outside the area. It is assumed that all lands within the area have such limited productive capacity that they will not permit of private ownership, and that it is in the interests of the community as a whole that all lands should come under single control in order to facilitate the development of resources and the reorganization of farm units and municipalities.

In order that social services may be consolidated and made available to the largest number of residents within the area, the board is prepared to encourage the exchange of lands to facilitate such consolidations. Where large land owners, such as mortgage companies, wish to retain their lands which may be scattered throughout the area, the board has found it advantageous to encourage the consolidation of such lands by means of exchange for other lands within the area. These large units are found to be more satisfactory and economical in operation and greatly facilitate administration. When once consolidated, these lands permit of the development of water resources, re-grassing and proper rotation of grazing.

The size of economical farm units depends upon soil, location and topography, but in most instances where land is devoted to grazing it is necessary that large units be established, extending from several sections up to several townships in size. There is, however, no advantage in allocating too large areas to the individual, thus imposing upon him lands which he is unable to use and thereby unable to secure revenue from them. In the leasing of grazing land it is the policy of the board to limit live stock to approximately 4 to 6 head of mature animals per quarter section of land according to the carrying capacity of the land, the rental of such land being graduated from 2 to 4 cents per acre. Where live stock is carried on head tax areas the charge per head is 60 cents for cattle and \$1 per head for horses. These areas are confined to sections where there is an adequate supply of water and where it is impossible to establish permanent leases. These areas are operated somewhat in a similar manner to community pastures. The extent to which head tax areas can be used is determined largely by the quantity of water available in the area. In years of extreme drought a very limited number of live stock is found in these areas. It has been the policy of the board to establish water supplies in such areas in order to make the same more productive and increase their carrying capacity.

That a certain amount of success has been achieved in the provincial Government's effort at rehabilitation of settlers remaining in the dry areas is evident from the fact that the older established areas, such as the Tilley East and Berry Creek, are self-supporting in so far as administration (other than school) is concerned. As a matter of fact, in the Tilley East area the revenues derived from the leases have realized sufficient to not only pay administration costs, but also to enable the board to put in several dams and other forms of improvement. There has been no call for assistance from the Government by school districts in this area for the past few years. It is anticipated that when the re-establishment of an area is complete, the revenue will be re-distributed and the share now deposited to the credit of the Special Municipal Areas Board will be allotted to the district, the school district and the provincial Government in a proper proportion.

Since the establishment of the work of the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act the Special Municipal Areas Board has been carrying on its work in co-operation with that organization.

Below is a table giving the number of farmers resident in the areas under the administration of the board for 1937.

Number of Farmers Resident in Each Area (1937)

Sullivan Lake..	711
Berry Creek..	400
Neutral Hills..	1,048
Sounding Creek..	1,070
Tilley East..	1,000
Total..	4,929

Total Rural Population—Dominion Census

1921..	40,647
1926..	29,787
1931..	32,903
1936..	29,588

Estimated approximate percentage cultivated lands 40 per cent—3,360,000 acres.

Parcels of Land in the Special Areas—(160 acres more or less)

Tilley East..	14,683
Berry Creek..	7,985
Sounding Creek..	9,708
Neutral Hills..	7,819
Bow West..	5,179
Sullivan Lake..	5,148
Total..	50,522

Total Relief Expenditures 1918-1937

Special Municipal Areas—Alberta

1918-1922—Seed and relief..	\$2,270,506 79
1930-1931—Seed relief..	672 21
1931—Seed grain relief..	17,340 91
1931-1932—Fodder relief..	84,992 84
1932—Seed grain relief..	92,450 58
1933-1934—Fodder relief..	304,332 39
1934—Seed grain relief..	128,489 79
1934-1935—Fodder relief..	341,075 29
1935—Fuel oil relief..	48,247 24
1935—Seed grain relief..	201,703 56
1935-1936—Fodder relief..	264,174 42
1936—Seed grain relief..	110,440 16
1937—Seed and fuel relief..	380,038 25
Total agricultural relief, 1918-1937..	\$4,246,464 43
Total direct relief, 1931-1937..	844,456 20
Grand total..	\$5,090,920 63

NOTE: The above figures do not include administration accounts or expenditures made in connection with relief programs, or any advances made by the Dominion Government prior to 1918.

Section VI

QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY OF THE RURAL RELIEF SITUATION

Relief in the drought areas up to the present has been given on the basis that it was an emergency measure necessary to meet acute conditions of distress arising from crop failure, and that it was only a temporary situation which would be remedied on the return of normal crops. But as year after year went by the anticipated crop did not materialize. Over large areas the necessity for relief continued, the year 1937 proving to be the most disastrous of all.

In order to obtain a picture of the condition of relief recipients in the drought areas and the results of the system of direct relief, a questionnaire was sent to some 1,200 representative citizens and leaders in community life, including clergymen, doctors, secretaries of municipalities, and members for rural constituencies of the provincial legislature and of the Dominion Parliament, resident in the drought areas of the three Prairie Provinces.

A total of 853 persons responded to the questionnaire and expressed their opinions in answer to a number of questions, of which five are noted below.

Population Shifting.—How many families are moving away from their farms in your district?

Medical and Dental Care.—Has there been adequate medical and dental care for residents of your municipality?

Effects of the General Situation on the Morale of the People.—What effect has the economic distress and the present system of relief on the morale of individuals and on community life?

Administration of Relief.—What suggestions, if any, would you make to improve the administration of relief?

Work and Wages Policy.—Are you in favour of a program of work in lieu of direct relief? If so, what suggestions would you make for a work with wages program in lieu of relief?

As a result of these replies a picture is revealed of great numbers of formerly independent, prosperous, enterprising and ambitious people being reduced to poverty as a result of complete crop failure over several years. As their own resources were gradually exhausted they were forced eventually to sacrifice their spirit of independence. They were unable to provide for their own families and required assistance to secure food and clothing for themselves, feed and fodder for their animals, and seed for next year's crop.

What this has meant in the way of mental and physical suffering to many of the best and most substantial citizens of Western Canada can never be known. When direct relief had to be resorted to on a large scale it can scarcely be a matter of surprise that with the continued disappointments year after year from repeated crop failure many began to lose courage, and to rely more and more on help from government sources.

While some have voluntarily moved away from their devastated farms, seeking more favourable localities in which to begin again, and others have been assisted by government funds to leave sub-marginal lands, the great majority of prairie farmers have courageously remained on their farms, meeting the situation as best they could, sowing the seed each succeeding year, always in the hope that moisture and good crops would come again and that they once more would be able to stand on their own feet and get away from relief.

The picture unfortunately does reveal loss of morale on the part of many, but in the main the majority of people have maintained their standard of moral integrity sustained by their faith in the ability of the country to come back, and by the assistance given them by Dominion, provincial and municipal authorities, and by the churches, philanthropic organizations and individuals in other parts of Canada. While many older people feel that they can never be re-established again in the comfortable position they once occupied, the chief sufferers have been young people brought up in an atmosphere of relief, with little opportunity for work, and their hopes for their own future blighted.

A detailed study of the replies of 425 clergymen, 210 doctors, 150 municipal secretaries and 68 members of Parliament and of the legislatures of the three Prairie Provinces, has been made, from which the following results have been tabulated.

POPULATION SHIFTING

In response to the question of population shifting it has been difficult to obtain accurate information in regard to the extent of removals from the farms in the dried-out areas or the destination of those who have left. The general consensus of opinion, however, is that there has been a considerable exodus of population. The population shifting has had three main aspects.

1. Moving to the cities.

2. Moving to other areas of the Prairie Provinces where moisture conditions have been more favourable.

3. Moving to other parts of Canada and to the United States. Questions in respect to population removals were asked the municipal secretaries and the clergy. One hundred and twenty of the replies received estimated that 10 per cent of the people of their areas had moved away. Other replies received indicated that removals amounted to 35 per cent of the population in some districts.

The replies in respect to removals indicated that comparatively few of these had gone to the cities. In the five-year period between 1931 and 1936, the urban population of the three Prairie Provinces declined by 7,637 while the rural population increased by 69,000.

The replies further showed that many people had moved to the northern part of the Prairie Provinces but that a greater number had left these provinces entirely to seek better conditions in British Columbia, Ontario, Quebec, and the United States. It is claimed by the municipal authorities in British Columbia that no less than 5,000 people from the prairies have settled in the Fraser valley during the past four years. Mr. W. W. Dawson, director of relief for Saskatchewan, states that during 1937 his department gave assistance to 186 families in order to enable them to move to points outside the province. The destinations of these families included almost every other province in Canada and some went to the United States and others to England and Scotland. Approximately 60 per cent of the replies from the drought areas of Saskatchewan indicated that the majority of those moving out had gone outside the province, while about 35 per cent gave the northern part of the province as their main destination. This would seem to indicate what is undoubtedly the fact, namely that the majority of the people leaving the drought areas are a direct loss to the province.

In spite of the fact that there has been an actual increase in the total population of the three Western Provinces during the drought period, this increase has not been by any means in proportion to the expected increase as indicated by the recorded excess of births over deaths in the five-year period referred to above. In Saskatchewan the excess of births over deaths in this period amounts to 71,440. To this must be added immigration into the province, amounting to 3,977. These figures, added to the 1931 census, should have given this province a population in 1936 of 997,202. Her actual population in that year was 930,693, indicating a loss by removals of more than 66,000.

On the same basis, Manitoba, with an increase of births over deaths of 41,385 and a reported immigration of 3,469, should have had in 1936 a population of 744,993. The 1936 census however, gave her population as only 711,216, indicating an exodus of 33,777. This loss would be reduced by about 3,000 people who recently moved into Manitoba from Saskatchewan.

Alberta similarly has had an excess of births over deaths of 55,545 and a reported immigration of 7,034, making a total expected increase of 62,579. Her actual increase as indicated by the census however, is only 41,177 making a loss of 21,402 which must be accounted for by removals from the province.

How many of these people can be expected to return to their prairie homes when moisture conditions again become normal no one can say. It is probable that a considerable number of them will do so but it is equally probable that a very large majority of them will not return.

MEDICAL AND DENTAL CARE

Has there been adequate medical and dental care for residents of your municipality?

Replies as to medical care indicated that the best traditions of medical practice have been maintained and that the medical service has been available to people, whether they could pay or not. Municipal doctors have carried on, even when the municipality could not pay the salary, and other doctors have attended patients without hope of ever being paid.

A large proportion of doctors stated that in their districts relief recipients received adequate medical care and hospitalization when necessary, but those not on relief were not so well looked after, not through any fault of the medical profession but because large numbers of people would not call a doctor when they could not pay, except in very urgent cases. As a result, among such people only emergency medical, dental and hospital care had been received. Drugs and dressing have been difficult to obtain when the municipality was unable to provide them. Fully trained nurses have gradually disappeared from the drought areas for no provision was made for them. The replies were practically unanimous that the people generally were not receiving dental care aside from extractions. Many school children have not been receiving the necessary dental care, and in many cases adenoids and tonsils have been neglected.

In reply to a question in respect to malnutrition among children the large majority of doctors stated that they did not consider the children were suffering from malnutrition at present any more than in more prosperous days. Malnutrition is caused not so much from lack of food as from lack of the right kinds of food.

Of 210 doctors replying to the questionnaire 135 expressed themselves as favourable to some form of state medicine or health insurance. Only five expressed themselves as opposed to such a policy. The plan for a municipal doctor has been of great assistance, though during the drought period many doctors did not receive their salaries. Free hospitalization of tubercular patients in Saskatchewan was cited as an example of what could be done when the state got behind the care of the sick. The consensus of opinion seemed to indicate that the municipal doctor scheme was not comprehensive enough and that some plan of state medicine should be undertaken on a larger scale. There was general agreement among the doctors that the plan evolved by the Department of Public Health of the province of Saskatchewan, which is set forth in Section 111 of this report, is dealing effectively with the situation as an emergency measure. But many of the rural doctors strongly emphasized the need of a system of state medicine or health insurance on a Dominion-wide scale.

THE EFFECTS OF THE SITUATION ON THE MORALE OF THE PEOPLE

What effect has the economic distress and the present system of relief upon the morale of individuals and on community life?

The replies to this question would indicate that something has been happening to the morale of a large number of people in the western rural areas during the past few years as a result of the depression and drought conditions.

It has been bad enough to see a beautiful "stand" of grain shrivelling up and turning brown under the pitiless heat of day after day of cloudless sky and searing winds. But add to this the effect of the dust storms. No one who has not experienced one can possibly imagine the depressing and nerve-racking effect of a really bad dust blizzard. Something happens to the farmer himself as he sees year after year black clouds of dust sweeping over his fields, and in some cases carrying away the top soil and with it the seed he has sown, or in other cases cutting down and burying beyond recovery the grain that has succeeded in surviving the drought and has begun to give some promise of a possible harvest. Discouragement is not confined to the farmer himself on account of loss of crops. Dust storms have played havoc with the homes. No matter how carefully and thoroughly the housewife may clean her home, nor how tightly she may keep every opening closed, dust permeates every part of the dwelling, covering floors, furniture, dishes, food, and clothing. These storms have often continued for days and while they were in progress they produced living conditions that were almost unendurable, even to the most courageous.

Can we wonder that with year after year of such experiences human endurance sometimes reaches its limit and something snaps? The evidence of the men who replied to our questionnaires is a somewhat sad commentary on the devastating effect of adverse conditions on the morale both of individuals and of the community.

EFFECT ON INDIVIDUAL MORALE

With regard to this question a wide variety of opinions was expressed but among all classes of replies there was rather general agreement that the morale of individuals has been adversely affected.

One doctor states: "The recent economic distress has been conducive to a lowering of the morale of many individuals. The character of some of them has deteriorated; the courage to face squarely the difficulties and the anxieties of the situation has greatly declined; and the tendency to accept false and subversive ideas has increased in proportion to the want and hardship of the people affected."

As one might expect, there is a definite tendency to discouragement and loss of ambition on the part of a considerable number of individuals. The type of economy of the West leads a farmer to expect an occasional year of little or no return for his labour. Even two years in succession can be borne without appreciable loss of confidence. But when the condition stretches into three and four and even seven and eight years, discouragement replaces hope and an attitude of apathy develops. This seems to be what has happened to a great many people under the stress of the drought. More than one hundred replies to the questionnaires gave this as a major development among individuals in their communities.

Together with this attitude has come the idea of a paternal state that stands ready and is obligated to come to the aid of those in need. A very large number of those who replied to the questionnaires expressed the opinion that the idea that the "state owes us a living" has received a great deal of emphasis during the past few years.

One writer, in the heart of the drought area, states: "My experience with relief and its effects on the morale of the people is depressing. It has surely resulted in a lowering of the morale and a weakening of the sense of responsibility. It has tended to create in some—many may be an apter word—the idea of dependence on the state as an independent body which has some magic source of supply of wealth."

An opinion often expressed with regard to the acceptance of relief is that there have been noted three stages. "First, after a desperate struggle to keep off relief, very reluctant application for assistance. Second, an attitude of passive acceptance of relief as inevitable and, finally, a tendency to demand all they think they should have."

Throughout a very great part of the affected area those who are suffering most are those who are not on relief. Provision is made for giving the necessary social services to those who are on relief. But those who have not yet applied to be placed on relief lists have no claim on anything for which they have not the money to buy, except such share as they may receive of the voluntary relief contributions which have been so generously sent year after year by other more favoured sections of the Dominion and also from the federal relief cars sent out in the fall of 1937.

THE EFFECT ON YOUTH

One of the serious features of the present situation is its effects on youth. It has been very difficult for young people to obtain employment in the smaller towns and villages. One correspondent writes: "Nothing can kill the ambition, or for that part, the capacity for employment of a young man or young woman quicker than a small prairie town where there is nothing to do, and little hope of finding employment. The average young person loses hope and very soon finds himself on the relief list with very little desire to go out and seek employment. I am thinking of actual cases which have come under my observation."

Replies to the questionnaire indicate that the education of prairie young people is being greatly curtailed. Many young people who would have gone on with high school and university work are being denied the opportunity. Lack of proper clothing and funds for paying fees keep many young people from high school attendance. Others with the ability and ambition to take a university course have not been able to do so on account of adverse financial conditions. The Saskatchewan Department of Education has done much through its correspondence school to provide high school work to the third year and many students have taken advantage of this.

It is difficult to measure the effect on the mental attitude of young people who have spent seven or eight years in an atmosphere of relief. Their sense of values cannot but be distorted. There seems little question that many young people of the drought areas of the West are being injured in morale as well as in physical fibre. One man said, "My boy was five years old when the drought began. I am very thankful he was not fifteen years of age at the time."

Thus there appear to be two most serious social aspects to the problem. First, the fact that the young people are being denied the opportunity to obtain an education adequate to enable them to take their place in life in a satisfactory way. Second, the very fact that young men and women are being thwarted in the normal desire to marry, itself creates a serious social problem.

EFFECT ON THE CHURCH AND OTHER COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

Nearly one-half of the 425 ministers and priests replying to the questionnaire stated that participation in church activities had decreased considerably. Many people decline to attend because of inability to support the church financially, others for lack of suitable clothing, or lack of means of conveyance.

The following is a typical reply. "In the majority of cases the people are so depressed that they have no heart to attend church services. Many remain away because they have no way of supporting the church. Others cannot afford to buy gasoline and there are very few driving horses and buggies in the country, with the result that in the country the attendance and the interest in the work of the church has been seriously affected."

The past few years have witnessed a very marked decline in the work of the rural church in the West. The open country church, of course, was being seriously affected long before the advent of the drought. But the town and village church has suffered great losses since the onset of the depression. Many formerly independent pastoral charges have been compelled for financial reasons to combine with other charges under the one minister, with consequent closing of many outlying preaching places.

With regard to other community organizations, much the same has been said. Lodges, women's organizations, community clubs, etc., have all suffered greatly.

While a large number of clergymen stated that the effect on such community organizations was less marked than on the church, yet the majority of them felt that they had been definitely weakened. The very fact that in the heart of the drought areas there has been a considerable percentage of the people move away has in itself had an adverse effect. The financial situation also has necessitated the curtailment of many of the activities of these organizations.

THE BRIGHTER SIDE

But while the men who are face to face with the actual situation in the drought areas have presented a rather sombre picture, it must not be thought that the fine spirit of the prairie farmer has in any real sense given way to despair. Some correspondents called attention to other developments which have resulted from the adverse conditions. They stated that the community spirit had improved and that community organizations of a voluntary and informal type were becoming more common.

A considerable number, even of those who felt that there had been a decided let-down in individual morale, stated that the morale of the community at large was good. It is a recognized sociological fact that it takes longer for community morale to disintegrate than individual morale. Ideals and attitudes in the mass may be preserved for a considerable time after they show signs of decaying in the individuals. Hence the community spirit may often achieve the redemption of the individual after the crisis has passed.

Nor must it be thought that the church activities in the afflicted areas have declined to a vanishing point, nor that the entries during the dry years are all on the debit side of the ledger. Quite a number of replies indicated no lack of interest in the work of the church and some even stated that the distressing experiences of the church and its people were causing the people to rally to the support of the church as never before.

One clergyman writes, "The economic shortage has tended to curtail activities *on behalf of the church* but it has made the church actually more active *on behalf of the people* and this has reacted in a rally to help and to appreciate the effort of the church to measure up to its responsibility. I believe the fine effort of the church, as seen through its remarkable work in gathering and distributing food and clothing from one area to another area far distant and in need, has had a fine influence on the general attitude to the church. It has provided a salutary example of the work of the church, merely as a social force, when the tendency is to seriously question the place of the church in the world. Our church here has had less functions but is functioning more."

Nor must the impression be left that the individual morale of the prairie dwellers is a thing of the past—that the fine "western spirit" that one heard so much about a few years ago is gone.

A number of correspondents state that the long struggle has had the effect of building up an *esprit de corps* in communities that bears a very close resemblance to the old pioneer spirit that some of us knew in the early homestead days of the West. The idea was expressed by several correspondents that the morale of the people in the districts longest afflicted dropped seriously during the first two or three years of the drought. Then later there seemed to come a recrudescence of the pioneer spirit that had carried them through the trying times of the early settlement of these western communities.

A councillor for 20 years, living in one of the most devastated areas of Saskatchewan, expresses his faith in the spirit of the people as follows: "Yesterday I was at an agricultural society meeting where one member, an old-timer, stated that he was prepared to stay with the ship till she sank. Another speaker created a laugh when he said 'If we get no more rain in the next few years than we have had in the past few the ship will be a long time in sinking.' The spirit and will to carry on, and the ability to face the future with a smile has been a characteristic of our people for over 50 years in this district."

The effect on the morale of the western people by the contribution of cars of foodstuffs, supplied by the Dominion Government in the fall of 1937, cannot be over estimated. A very significant comment on the effect of this gift was made by the reeve of a rural municipality, who stated that he knew personally of some dozen or more families in his own community who were definitely preparing to abandon their farms and to move to some other area, but who changed their minds and decided to stay when this relief came along. He said it made them realize that there were people in Canada who did care what happened to them. The reeve of another municipality made a similar report.

While it can be seen that the conditions of the last few years have had unfortunate effects upon many people, yet it takes more than hardship, however severe and prolonged, to destroy real moral fibre. One clergyman says, "The fact that the greatest number of our citizens are still law-abiding, still church-going, still charitable in the highest sense of the word shows their reaction to the hardships which they now undergo."

One doctor summed up his opinion of the effect of the economic distress as follows: "Why all this fuss about the morale of the people of Saskatchewan? Everyone knows that over large areas the present condition is that the people would starve if they were not helped. They will accept help just as willingly as they gave it in years gone by when they were flush. The people of Saskatchewan were never behind in giving when they had it to give. All changes in ethics and morals will no doubt be modified for the better when conditions improve."

THE ADMINISTRATION OF RELIEF

In approaching the question of the administration of relief it must ever be kept in mind that relief in the drought areas has always been looked upon as an emergency problem. When, because of the small crop and low prices of 1931, it was seen that relief must be administered on a large scale, no one ever thought that it would extend year after year. Only emergency plans were made to meet the immediate situation. The technique to handle the situation has developed as year after year relief continued as a necessity. But even yet the men in charge of relief are not willing to accept the idea that rural relief will be permanently necessary on the prairies. They are firm in the belief that with a fair amount of moisture relief can be abandoned. They are justified in this by the fact, as will be shown in Section VIII, that farmers go off relief just as soon as they receive even a partial crop. Urban relief, as our great cities well know, is an entirely different problem.

In answer to the question: "What suggestions could you make for improving the administration and distribution of relief?" there was a fairly general opinion expressed that, so long as direct relief is necessary the present system

is in the main quite satisfactory. Many made minor suggestions regarding the details of administration. Among the most commonly expressed opinions was that there should be a closer check-up of a man's circumstances before admitting him to relief. It was felt that some were getting relief who were not entitled to it.

Out of 785 replies from clergymen, rural municipal secretaries and doctors, only 33 stated that they felt that politics is being allowed to interfere with the administration of relief; 59 felt that the administration would be better in the hands of an independent commission of some kind but they had no definite suggestions as to how such a commission should be formed. Some felt that the distribution of relief should be taken out of the hands of the councils since the fact of their being an elected body made them subject to influence. But about as many correspondents stated that the municipal councils were the logical bodies to administer and distribute relief since they knew, better than anyone else, the people with whom they had to deal and the conditions which faced them. Evidently the success of a council in handling relief depends upon the personnel of that body. The reply of one municipal secretary very aptly sums up the general impression gained from a study of the replies on this point. "Relief under any system has a tendency to break down the morale. It is very difficult to administer as it should be. In many cases it is undesirable members of the council that create demoralizing effects. The present system seems to me to be satisfactory, provided the councils will co-operate with the Government and its officials. It is, in my opinion, the best system inasmuch as it puts the administration in the hands of local authorities. Without that assistance the Government would have difficulty as they are not familiar with the individual applicants."

A member of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly writes as follows: "Relief as now administered by the municipal body is preferable to a commission in that the individual councillors have a personal contact and can determine the need. It is also more cheaply administered."

A WORK AND WAGES POLICY ADVOCATED

Are you in favour of a program of work in lieu of direct relief? If so, what suggestions would you make for a work with wages program in lieu of relief?

In reply to the above question there was a large agreement of opinion to the effect that if possible a "work and wages" program should be adopted in lieu of direct relief. In view of the fact, however, that this survey has to do with relief arising from distress in rural areas due to drought conditions rather than from unemployment, it is not necessary for the purposes of this report that this particular phase of the problem should be discussed here.

In all considerations of a works program in lieu of direct relief, it must be remembered that farmers on relief are not unemployed. Indeed, many of them are more fully employed during the present conditions than in normal times.

DOMINION-PROVINCIAL YOUTH TRAINING PROGRAM

There are two groups of men in the rural areas who require special consideration. They are the farmers' sons who are not needed on the land and the young men in the towns and villages and small hamlets which dot the prairie provinces. These run into many thousands of men and constitute one of the major relief problems. Many of them are young unmarried men and would not necessarily have to find work near home. For the past several years in the worst areas of the province there has been little work available. From a social as well as from an economic point of view it is imperative that these young men should find employment.

Recognizing the seriousness of the youth problem, the Dominion Government set aside in August, 1937, the sum of one million dollars to be used as grants-in-aid to the various provinces to enable them to inaugurate a scheme of Youth Training which would accomplish the twofold purpose of conserving the morale of youth and of giving them actual education and training which would assist them in getting jobs.

The sum was to be distributed among the provinces on condition of their expending dollar for dollar and of adopting a program directed towards the rehabilitation of their youth. The scheme was to be confined to young men and women between the ages of 18 and 30, not necessarily on relief, but in necessitous circumstances and registered for employment with the Employment Service of Canada.

The program was to consist of:

- (a) Training projects of an occupational nature devised to increase employability.
- (b) Short-term learnership courses, to provide theoretical training along with employment.
- (c) Work projects of a reconditioning or training nature to restore loss of morale and also conserve natural resources.
- (d) Training projects of a physical nature to help maintain health and morale.

In Saskatchewan \$80,000 was voted towards the program, thus providing for a total expenditure of \$160,000, and the administration was placed under the Department of Education. In carrying out the program special consideration was given to young people from the drought areas. In co-operation with the provincial university provision is being made for occupational training allied to agriculture for unemployed young people from farms and the rural districts of the province.

For men, "short" and "winter" courses are provided at the provincial university in agriculture or related subjects. The short courses include one-week courses in farm machinery, especially tractors, and six-weeks courses in various specialized farm subjects. The winter courses are in the general field of agriculture and are for a period of about six months.

The rural work for young women is given in special "schools" organized in various centres throughout the province. The courses given are along the line of household economics, home craft, handicrafts and suitable farm subjects. Attention is also given to drama, community singing and physical training. Some of these courses are of short duration, a week or ten days, while others last for a longer period of five or six weeks. In all, these classes have been given at 87 different points throughout the province. Up to December 31, 1937, the total registration in these classes had been 2,209.

The urban program includes classes given in various cities and large towns in the province both for boys and for girls. The girls' classes consist of instruction in homecraft—training for specialized domestic service, dressmaking, commercial refresher, personal grooming and supervised recreational and physical training. During January there was a total enrolment in these classes of 722 in eleven different centres.

The instruction for boys follows along the lines of motor mechanics, machine shop practice, carpentry, practical electricity, radio repair and construction, mineralogy and forestry and diesel engine operation. These classes last from four to four and one-half months and, like the classes for girls, have succeeded in reaching a large number of young men. The January enrolment in the various centres was 1,038.

It may be said in general that these courses aim at increasing the immediate employability of the young men and women enrolled in them. Information received to date would seem to indicate that they are achieving their purpose to a very satisfactory degree.

In Alberta a grant of a similar amount, viz. \$80,000, was made for this program and much the same type of work is being carried on, also in connection with the provincial university. A special phase of the program in this province is the employing and training of young men as assistants to the provincial fire rangers. Special attention is also given to the training of unemployed young women in the urban centres as household workers and for specialized situations.

Manitoba has voted \$100,000 for this purpose and a somewhat more extensive program is being carried on. In addition to training courses at various centres throughout the province a works program of some magnitude has been adopted. This includes the establishment of forestry camps, where the men receive regular wages instead of maintenance only, and where they are given instruction in forestry. With a view to preparing young people for the particular type of jobs which seem most likely to open up, the co-operation of the Winnipeg Board of Trade, the Manufacturers' Association, and the Retail Merchants' Association was sought and readily given.

Further details regarding this program are given in the Manitoba section of this report, on page 66.

While this youth training program is an effort on the part of the Government to help youth find its feet, yet it must be remembered that the question of securing permanent employment for all who should work is a problem of the first magnitude. Good crops in the West will help to solve the problem both in the West and in the East. But even with good crops the unemployment problem can only be solved by the wisest and most constructive leadership on the part of our governments and by the whole-hearted co-operation of every Canadian citizen.

SUMMARY

The study of the social effects of the crop failures of the past eight years leads to the following conclusions.

1. There seems to be something about the climate and also the vast expanse of the West which engenders the spirit of optimism. Because of this, and because it requires money in a large way to buy land, erect buildings, and purchase machinery and needed supplies, the western farmer has always utilized credit to a large extent. In good years when the crop was threshed in the fall his first thought was to pay his debts. But this has been impossible during the past eight years and his debts have amounted to impossible figures. The hopelessness of the debt situation has borne heavily upon the individual farmer. As has already been shown, relief has come to the farmer through the Debt Adjustment Act and the board of review and generous reductions have been made. But the cultivated land of Saskatchewan still carries an average indebtedness of \$15 per acre. The younger farmer, and those still in the prime of life may hope to see the day when they are free of debt. But the older men are discouraged and feel that they will never be free of the incubus of debt. The replies to the questionnaire show that this burden of debt rests like a pall upon a large percentage of the farmers.

The morale of the people has suffered to a certain extent because of the strain of the drought years and the consequent necessity of accepting relief, yet there is every reason to believe that with the return of normal years the people will be glad to stand on their own resources and rebuild their shattered economic life. The great majority of people are honest and prefer to provide for themselves and pay their debts. This has always been especially true of an agricultural people.

One would like to pay a tribute to the men and women who refused to take relief even though in great necessity. A doctor writes of a man who declined relief, stating that he would work his way back to Denmark rather than take it. This man wore gunny sacks around his feet in lieu of shoes when doing his chores in order that he could buy shoes for his children that they might attend school. Another doctor tells of a woman requiring a special post-operative diet including plenty of milk. The milk was arranged for but she refused to take it in order to give it to her children. A minister writes of a widow in a Saskatchewan village who boasts "I've raised twelve children and I have never taken a cent of relief."

2. This survey of the administration of rural relief in the three Prairie Provinces leads to the conclusion, in accord with the great majority of the replies received to the questionnaire, that the present system of working through the rural municipal councils is quite satisfactory. Any other method would add greatly to the expense of administration. It is well however, that wherever possible the municipality should bear a percentage of the costs of relief. The treasury of the municipality is nearer home than that of the provincial or federal capitals and it is quite natural that the members of the municipal councils would carefully guard their own treasuries.

3. The people of Canada have a right to know that the men who are responsible for the administration of relief in each of these provinces are men of character and ability and that this important and difficult work is being handled wisely and efficiently. One cannot come in contact with these three men, Mr. A. McNamara, Deputy Minister of Public Works and Supervisor of Relief for Manitoba, Mr. W. W. Dawson, Director of Relief for Saskatchewan and Mr. A. A. MacKenzie, Commissioner of Relief for Alberta, without realizing their keen interest in the problem with which they are dealing.

4. Too much cannot be said in praise of the heroic work of the hundreds of clergy and priests in the country districts of these Prairie Provinces who have been attempting the almost impossible task year after year of ministering to two or three different charges, often conducting four or even five services each Sunday in order that as many people as possible may be reached by the ministrations of the church. Many have undermined their health, exhausted all of what meagre savings they may have had and suffered the severest privations, but they have stayed with their jobs in the face of the most discouraging conditions the West has ever faced. The people of the West will not soon forget the ministrations of the church as represented by these stalwart missionaries.

The same may be said of the rural doctors, who at all times of the day and night and in all kinds of weather have driven long miles to bring their healing art to the sick. With incomes reduced to a minimum they have nevertheless followed the fine traditions of their profession and are ever ready to respond to the call of suffering.

Another class of men to whom special reference should be made are the secretary-treasurers of the rural municipalities. These men occupy positions of great responsibility. They are to the municipal council what the general manager is to the board of directors of a large corporation. A wise and efficient secretary-treasurer is a most valuable man in the municipality and by careful management may save thousands of dollars annually for the rural taxpayer. Many men of character and training are to be found among this group. They deserve generous remuneration. The conditions of the last few years have added immensely to their responsibilities. Working day and night these men have tried to meet the situation and have rendered a fine service, especially in regard to direct relief and agricultural aid.

Section VII

FORCES AT WORK MAKING FOR STABILITY IN SASKATCHEWAN

It should be noted that our governments, both Dominion and provincial, have not been satisfied simply to give direct relief and agricultural aid to the many thousands of farmers who are suffering from the crop failures of the past years. Constructive plans and long-range policies have been developed which have for their object the rehabilitation of the drought and soil-drifting areas of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta.

A notable program of far-reaching importance is at present being carried on by the authority of the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act. The writer of this report has been so deeply impressed with the value of this work that he invited the secretary of the advisory committee, Mr. W. L. Jacobson, to prepare a memorandum setting forth the policy and program which is being followed. Mr. Jacobson very kindly undertook this responsibility. The memorandum sets forth in such a clear and concise fashion the work which is being carried on under the act that it was decided to include the memorandum in full in this report.

THE PRAIRIE FARM REHABILITATION ACT

The Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act was passed by the Parliament of Canada in April, 1935, to provide for the rehabilitation of the drought and soil-drifting areas in the open plains of the provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta.

The Act as first passed provided for an appropriation of \$750,000 to be expended during the fiscal year 1935-36 and a sum not to exceed \$1,000,000 a year for the four succeeding years. The Act also provided for the appointment, by Order in Council, of an advisory committee to advise the federal Minister of Agriculture in the administration of the Act.

An essential feature of the work outlined under the original Act was to provide assistance and encouragement on a self-help basis in rehabilitating individual farmers, including assistance in the conservation of surface water supplies for household, stock-watering and irrigation, re-grassing, tree planting, reclamation of land damaged by soil drifting, and assistance in soil-drift control largely through local agricultural improvement associations organized from the various Dominion Experimental Stations in the open-plains area. Assistance was also provided under the Act to the universities of the provinces in continuing and extending soil surveys and for an economic survey in co-operation with the provincial governments.

In 1937 the scope of the Act was extended by amendment to provide for rehabilitation on a community basis, including the establishment of community pastures, reserve pastures, and combinations of irrigation and pasture, in the open-plains area where the soil and climate have been found by experience and survey to be unsuited for grain farming. The Act at that time was amended to make it possible for Parliament to vote more than \$1,000,000 a year and to provide for the appointment of more than one advisory committee.

The amount of \$2,000,000 was voted for the fiscal year 1937-38 on the understanding that approximately \$1,000,000 would be expended for the purpose outlined in the original Act and that the additional \$1,000,000 voted would be expended for rehabilitation of communities rather than individuals by taking non-arable areas out of grain and establishing community and reserve pastures.

A DUGOUT EXCAVATED UNDER P.F.R.A. SUPERVISION



Location of dugout, NE $\frac{1}{4}$ 2-3-3 W.P.M., Plum Coulee, Manitoba; dimension, 150' x 74' x 15', 3,950 cubic yards, 666,562 imp. gals. The box at the bottom of the dugout is a filter inlet. Nov., 1936.



This dugout is now supplying the town of Plum Coulee and farmers with water. Before this was dug drinking water was shipped in from Winnipeg. Aug., 1937.



Dugout excavated by horses and scrapers, in 1933. Has never gone dry. Location, S.E. 20-1-26 W.P.M.; size, approx. 140' x 70' x 16'. Owner, G. Hannah, Waskada, Man.



Dugout excavated by dragline in July, 1937. Fall rains filled it. Location, N.W. 15-1-26 W.P.M. Size, 100' x 60' x 12'. Aug. 30, 1937.

The administration of the Act is vested in the federal Minister of Agriculture, who is assisted by the following advisory committees:—

The Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Advisory Committee.—Dr. G. S. H. Barton (chairman), Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Ottawa; Dr. E. S. Archibald, Director, Experimental Farms, Ottawa; R. A. Olmsted, Legal Adviser, Department of Agriculture, Ottawa.

Advisory Committee on Land Utilization.—Dr. E. S. Archibald (chairman), Director, Experimental Farms, Ottawa; John Vallance, Regina; W. L. Jacobson (secretary), Regina; O. S. Longman, Edmonton (Government of Alberta); J. Ellis, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg; Dr. F. H. Auld, Regina (Government of Saskatchewan); R. M. Hanham, Woodrow, Sask.; Paul Farnalls, Halkirk, Alta.; J. A. Ross, Melita, Man.; W. G. Yule, Regina (Canadian Bankers' Assn.); J. D. Guild, Winnipeg (Canadian National Railways); A. Newman, Calgary (Canadian Pacific Railways); O. H. Freer, Winnipeg (Mortgage Loans Assn.); A. E. Joslyn, Winnipeg (Hudson's Bay Company).

Advisory Committee on Water Development.—John Vallance (chairman), Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Office, Regina; W. L. Jacobson (secretary), Regina; B. Russell, Regina; L. C. Charlesworth, Edmonton (Government of Alberta); C. J. McGavin, Regina (Government of Saskatchewan); B. B. Hogarth, Winnipeg (Government of Manitoba).

Supervising Cultural Work.—Dr. E. S. Archibald.

Committee on Soil and Soil Drifting.—E. S. Hopkins (chairman), Dominion Department of Agriculture; M. J. Tinline, D. L. Doughty, W. S. Chepil, N. M. Ross, T. Stevenson, W. H. Fairfield, A. E. Palmer, L. B. Thomson, H. L. Seamans, Nelson Young. *Provincial Departments of Agriculture:* O. S. Longman, S. H. Vigor, J. H. Ellis. *Colleges of Agriculture:* J. Mitchell, J. H. Ellis, G. L. Shanks, Wm. Allan, E. A. Hardy, F. A. Wyatt, K. W. Neatby, J. MacGregor Smith. *Other Organization:* J. Patterson (Dominion Meteorological Services), T. J. Harrison (Board of Grain Commissioners), J. D. Guild (Canadian National Railways), F. W. Reinhoehl (Colonization Finance Corporation of Canada, Ltd.).

Detailed supervision of the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation work in the last three seasons has been largely performed by the Dominion Experimental Farms. With the extension of the program, however, the work has become too heavy to carry on under the Experimental Farms alone, and has been reorganized, with Mr. George Spence as Director of Rehabilitation. Under him, Mr. J. Vallance continues as Superintendent of Water Development, and Mr. O. H. Freer has been appointed as Superintendent of Land Utilization, which includes the establishment of pasturage on lands withdrawn from cultivation. Purely soil reclamation work, including soil drift control, tree planting, regrassing and other work pertaining to cultural practices, will remain in charge of the Experimental Farms.

The open plains area of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta is part of the great plains of the North American continent which extend from Mexico in the south to a point some 260 miles north of the international border on the boundary line between Saskatchewan and Alberta. Agriculture in the great plains area is to a large extent a ceaseless struggle against drought and since first settled the area has suffered three major drought periods, including one in the 60's and one in the 90's of the past century and the more recent drought period from 1929-37. In Canada, the open plains area comprises about 60,000,000 acres in the three Prairie Provinces and may be roughly described by a line drawn from a point on the international border between the United States and Canada, south of the town of Morden in Manitoba, in a northwesterly direction to the town of Lloydminster on the Saskatchewan-Alberta border. From this point, the line extends

WATER STORAGE DAMS CONSTRUCTED IN ALBERTA UNDER
THE P.F.R.A. PROGRAM

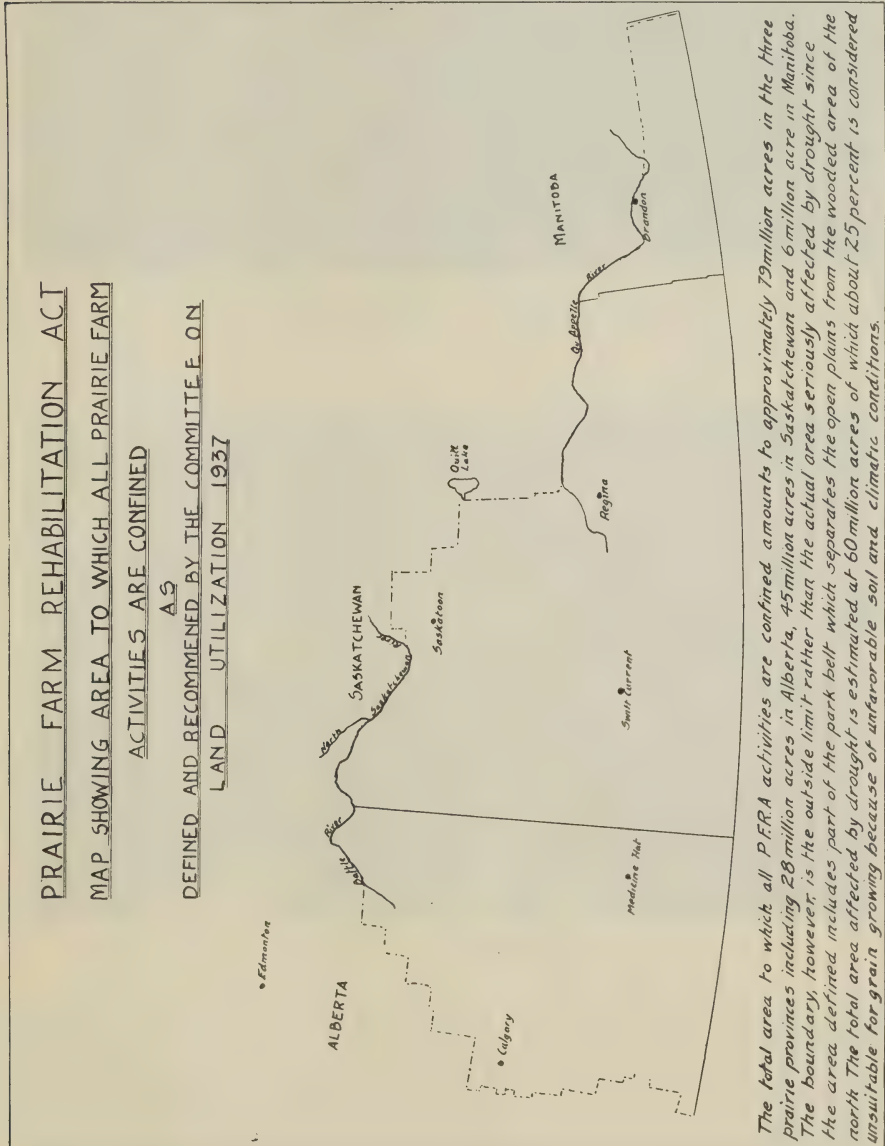


The dam above was completed in 1936 at a total cost of \$738.00. The dam shown below was completed in 1937 and was only partly filled with water when photographed. Note the outlet pipe near the bottom of the dam and rock riprap placed on the upstream face of the dam to give protection against wave action. This dam will provide water for stock and for some irrigation of garden and hay crops.



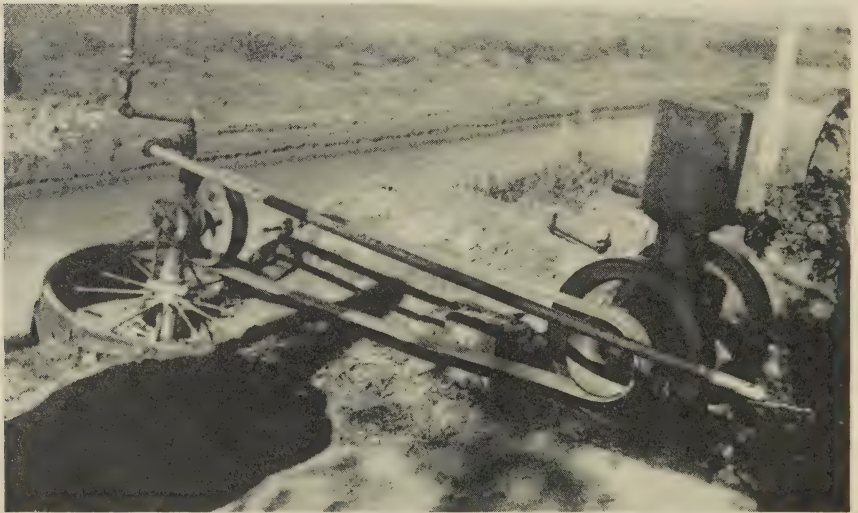
in a southwesterly direction to the town of Cochrane, just west of Calgary, thence southward to the international boundary line where Alberta and British Columbia meet. Map No. 17 shows the area to which all Prairie Farm Rehabilitation activities are confined. This boundary is based largely on municipal lines but follows as far as possible natural boundaries such as lakes and rivers. This map shows the outside limit of the open plains area and in places includes some park land. The boundary line therefore includes areas not so seriously affected by drought.

About 25 per cent of the total area seriously affected by drought is considered non-arable owing to poor soil and unfavourable climatic conditions. These non-arable areas, which are quite widely distributed over the open plains, vary





A community dam at Craik, Saskatchewan.



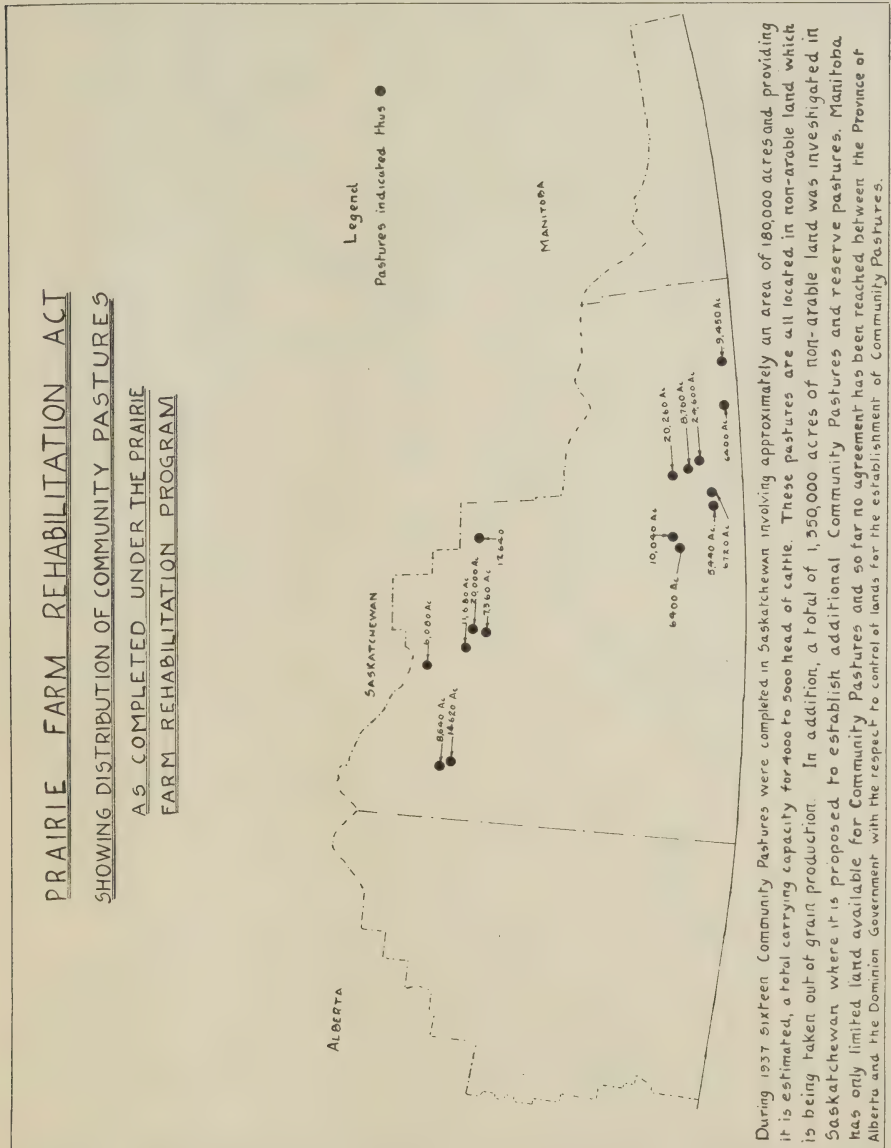
Pump and engine used to irrigate a garden.

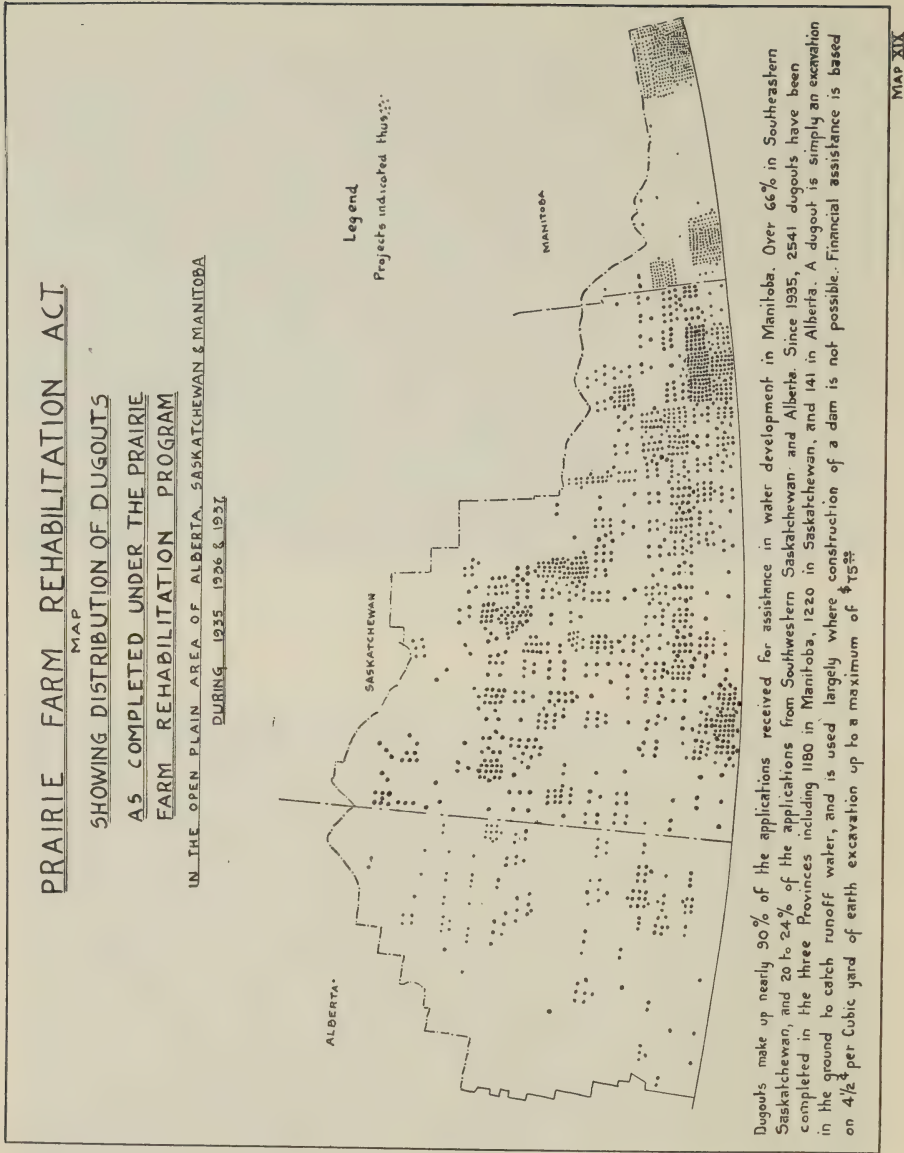
from lands where a few individuals are able to make a living to lands where settlers should not be encouraged to remain. The Prairie Farm Rehabilitation program therefore involves two main divisions including (1) the problem pertaining to non-arable lands in so-called marginal areas which are to be taken out of grain growing and where community pastures are to be established, and (2) the larger areas of better lands where conditions are more favourable for grain farming.

COMMUNITY AND RESERVE PASTURES

The advisory committee on land utilization was appointed to advise the minister with respect to the policy in dealing with the non-arable areas under the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation program involving the withdrawal of these lands from cultivation, removal of settlers to better lands, regressing, water development and the establishment of community or reserve pastures.

The main features of the procedure provide that the provincial government involved is to assume the responsibility for selection of areas of non-arable lands for use as community pastures and reserve pastures and to make recommendations to the Dominion Government. The procedure also provides that the provincial Government enter into agreement with the Dominion Government to place con-





trol of any lands involved with the Dominion to ensure permanence and to avoid any possibility of resettlement in the event of wetter years returning.

During 1937, 16 community pastures (Map XVIII) were established in the drought area of Saskatchewan, varying in size from approximately 6,000 acres to 25,000 acres each, and involving a total area of some 180,000 acres. In addition, some 30 community pastures were investigated during 1937 in Saskatchewan involving approximately 400,000 acres of land. The Saskatchewan Government also submitted for investigation five special areas involving 1,350,000 acres where it is proposed to establish reserve pastures for the purpose of not only withdrawing the lands from cultivation but also from grazing, to provide reserves

of feed and grass for the drier years and finally to inaugurate a large-scale range improvement program. The removal of these areas from grain growing and the establishment of community pastures are considered of fundamental importance in improving the agricultural set-up of the open plains area, not only in reducing relief expenditures for individuals located in these areas which are too low in production because of soil and climatic conditions to sustain the population, but also in using these lands for the only purpose for which they are suited.

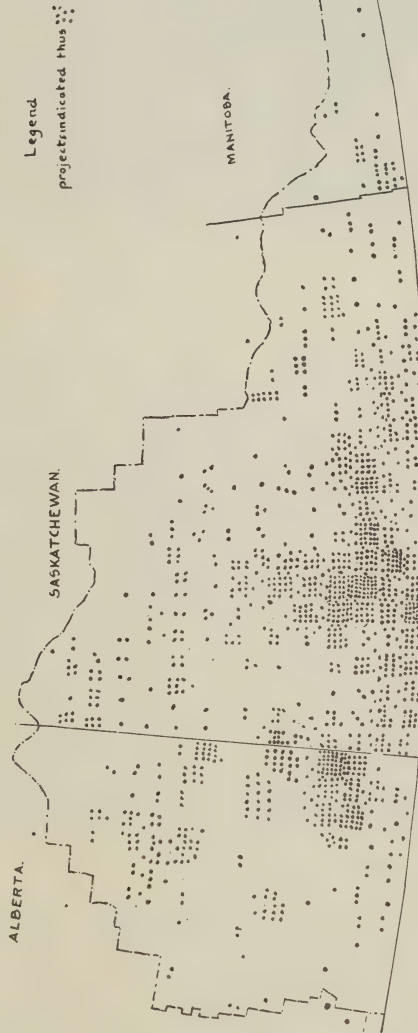
In utilizing pasture areas being established, the Minister of Agriculture suggested, at a conference held in Regina, May 6, 1937, for the purpose of organizing the land utilization work under the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation program, that these lands be made breeding areas for the production of calves and

PRAIRIE FARM REHABILITATION ACT

MAP SHOWING DISTRIBUTION OF STOCKWATER DAMS

AS COMPLETED UNDER THE PRAIRIE FARM REHABILITATION PROGRAM

IN THE OPEN PLAIN AREA OF ALBERTA, SASKATCHEWAN & MANITOBA
DURING 1935, 1936 & 1937



Over 1414 Stockwatering Dams have been completed in the Three Prairie Provinces since the start of the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act Program in 1935, including 52 in Manitoba, 983 in Saskatchewan, and 379 in Alberta. For the most part, these consist of earthen dams across ravines, draws, & coulees, and on the average will store from 3 to 10 Ac. feet of water from spring run-off, and heavy summer rains. In addition to Engineering services, financial assistance provided is based on $4\frac{1}{2}^c$ per cubic yard of earth excavated, plus 25^c per cu. yard for rock and total cost of material, up to a maximum of \$150⁰⁰ for all three items when the project is completed, and passes Engineering inspection.

MAP XX

feeders rather than finished cattle. The breeding of a uniform and suitable type of cattle would be necessary to make this successful and to meet the demands of the Old Country market. The plan as outlined by the minister not only provides for the use of non-arable lands in the open plains being taken out of grain production and used for the establishment of pastures but also provides for the utilization of feed produced in Eastern Canada in preparing these cattle on eastern farms for finishing in the Old Country. Cattle bred in Western Canada are favoured in the Old Country because they are healthier and it has been found that cattle do better when moved from the western plains to Eastern Canada and then to the Old Country.

WATER DEVELOPMENT

Substantial progress has been made in the phase of the rehabilitation program devoted to the conservation of surface water for domestic and stockwatering purposes and for irrigation where feasible. This work includes two main classes such as community projects either for stockwatering or irrigation and individual projects including dugouts, stockwatering dams and small irrigation schemes. (Maps XIX and XX.) Construction of the community projects is administered directly from the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation office in Regina while the smaller projects are administered through the water rights office of each province.

Since the work started in 1935, eight community projects have been constructed in Manitoba, all for stockwatering and domestic use. Some 10 storage reservoirs have been constructed or are under construction in Saskatchewan for irrigation purposes in addition to some 27 community stockwatering dams. The total estimated storage capacity of all community projects completed or under construction in Saskatchewan is estimated at 127,614 acre feet and the 10 irrigation reservoirs, it is estimated, will provide water for nearly 50,000 acres of land.

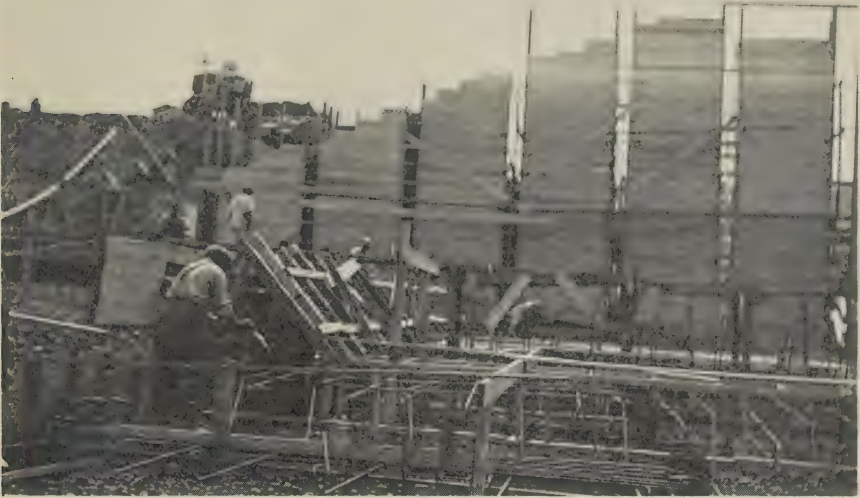
Some 10 irrigation projects have been completed, repaired or are under construction in Alberta involving a total of 43,535 acres of land. Community stockwatering dams constructed in Alberta include some 26 projects in the Special Municipal Areas completed during 1936-37 and 1937-38 at a total cost of \$20,642.

Since the program was inaugurated in 1935 and up to the end of the present fiscal year, the total estimated expenditure for large water development projects in Manitoba is \$27,681, \$368,933 in Saskatchewan and \$168,140 in Alberta.

The possibilities of utilizing surface water, particularly for irrigation, are greater in Alberta than in either Saskatchewan or Manitoba owing to the close proximity of Alberta to the eastern watershed of the Rocky mountains and the opportunity for diverting at a reasonable cost water from the several rivers which flow through the foothills. Large irrigation works were in existence, however, before the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation program was inaugurated in 1935. Prior to that date it had been estimated that from \$50,000,000 to \$60,000,000 had been expended in constructing irrigation works in Alberta to irrigate over 1,000,000 acres of land. To date about half of this area has been developed and these irrigated lands have proved an important and vital stabilizing factor during periods of drought even though large irrigation development in Alberta has suffered through over-development during the earlier years of settlement owing to the long wait for settlers. Much of the work deteriorated beyond repair without ever being used. One large project was constructed on the fringe of the low rainfall area and later years proved that the rainfall was sufficient to dry farm quite successfully without irrigation. This project involved an area of some 217,000 acres of irrigated land where water is now being used only to a limited extent.

The economic and agricultural value of the large irrigation projects located out in the open plains area of southern Alberta has been demonstrated particularly during the past seven or eight years. The fact that less than \$800,000

was expended for feed and fodder relief in Alberta during the fiscal year 1936-37 and not likely over \$750,000 is to be expended during the fiscal year 1937-38 is due no doubt, in a large measure, to the existence of these large irrigation projects throughout the drought area, and had the works, now



Construction on the Val Marie irrigation project.



A good type of dugout.

constructed, been fully developed and in operation; southern Alberta could have easily had a surplus of feed for use in other parts of the drought-stricken areas.

The principle underlying financial assistance from public funds for the construction of community irrigation projects is that these irrigation works are of such a nature and the benefits are of such general community value that the cost of constructing the necessary works is not properly charged to the

P.F.R.A. SOIL RECLAMATION WORK AT CADILLAC, SASKATCHEWAN, CONDUCTED
FROM THE DOMINION EXPERIMENTAL STATION, SWIFT CURRENT.



One phase of P.F.R.A. work includes the reclamation of badly drifted soil areas. Fortunately conditions shown in the above photograph, taken in April, 1937, are not widespread but such areas are a serious menace to any adjacent good lands, since drifting of this nature will continue to spread unless checked. Note the threshing machine nearly buried by the drifting sand.

The photograph below, taken of the same field later in the summer of 1937, shows a crop of spring rye seeded after the land had been listed to check drifting until the rye was established. In the fall, crested wheat grass was seeded into the standing rye which provides excellent protection against wind and drought until the grass plants are established.



land that is actually irrigated. Moreover, the expenditure of public moneys for feed and fodder relief during periods of dry years can, it is believed, be most effectively reduced by the development of projects to utilize to the fullest possible extent all available water supplies in the open plains area. The advisory committee have not, however, approved expenditures of public funds for the construction of very large irrigation schemes that have been proposed owing to high costs. While the cost of constructing necessary works for the smaller community irrigation projects is considered properly chargeable to public funds, where there is evidence of community benefit, it is recognized that the cost of maintenance and operation for any project so constructed must be paid for out of production from the lands irrigated. The development of irrigation under the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation program is being confined to the relatively smaller projects. Any project which does not pass this test has not been recommended, such as the projected North Saskatchewan irrigation project, involving a possible area of over 1,400,000 acres and entailing the construction of a canal extending from the foothills in Alberta, across central Alberta into central Saskatchewan. There are, however, extensive areas in southern Alberta where it is considered economically feasible to undertake additional irrigation development on a community scale owing chiefly to the relatively low cost of diverting water and the close proximity of the lands to be irrigated to the water supply.

So far, irrigation development under the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation program in Alberta has been confined largely to the extension and repair of existing projects, including the Eastern Irrigation District where Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act funds have been expended to the extent of \$22,400, making some 14,000 acres of additional land irrigable. An additional \$50,000 is being expended on the Rolling Hills section of the Eastern Irrigation District where some 30,000 acres of virgin land will be made irrigable. During 1936 and 1937, \$80,000 was expended for repair of the Canada Land and Irrigation Company project where some 250 farmers are irrigating over 34,200 acres of land. Other projects in Alberta include the expenditure of \$3,000 in repairing the works of the Mountain View project involving some 3,600 acres of irrigable land, and the drilling of an exploratory gas well on the Red Deer river near Atlee, Alberta, for the purpose of determining the possibility of finding gas for use in pumping water from the Red Deer river for irrigation purposes. Atlee is located in what is considered the driest portion of the open plains area and where feed production is a serious problem. The well has not been completed.

Irrigation development in Saskatchewan is confined entirely to new projects and the principal development has so far been confined to the Cypress Hills area in the southwest of the province and the Souris and Moose Mountain rivers in the southeast. The Cypress Lake reservoir now under construction is considered the key to development of the Frenchman river and Battle creek for irrigation purposes in the southwest. This reservoir when completed will have a storage capacity of 70,000 acre-feet and is to be used for storing water from the Frenchman river and its tributaries and also Battle creek for irrigation purposes in these two drainage basins. Projects so far completed to utilize water from the Cypress Lake storage are the Eastend and Val Marie projects involving a total area of over 9,000 acres when fully developed. The Cypress Lake storage project when completed will provide water, it is estimated, for over 20,000 acres of land, including approximately 10,000 on the Frenchman river and 10,000 on Battle creek.

While 1,215,000 acres of land are irrigable in Saskatchewan so far as engineering feasibility and water supply are concerned, over 925,000 acres of this could not be irrigated without the construction of very costly works. The most than can be economically irrigated in Saskatchewan is estimated at 100,000 acres so far as the construction of community projects is concerned.

P.F.R.A. RECLAMATION WORK, CADILLAC, SASKATCHEWAN.



Listing at Cadillac. April, 1937.



Seeding with Dempster drill at the Cadillac reclamation area April, 1937.
Note the furrows and width of drill space 10 inches.

In addition, approximately 150,000 acres may be irrigated by the development of individual schemes, making a potential maximum of 250,000 acres of irrigable land in the province. This area is not large compared to the potential irrigable area in Alberta, where mountain streams provide more abundant water supplies and where topographical conditions afford more opportunity for diverting water economically. The full development and utilization of the



Irrigating in Southern Saskatchewan.



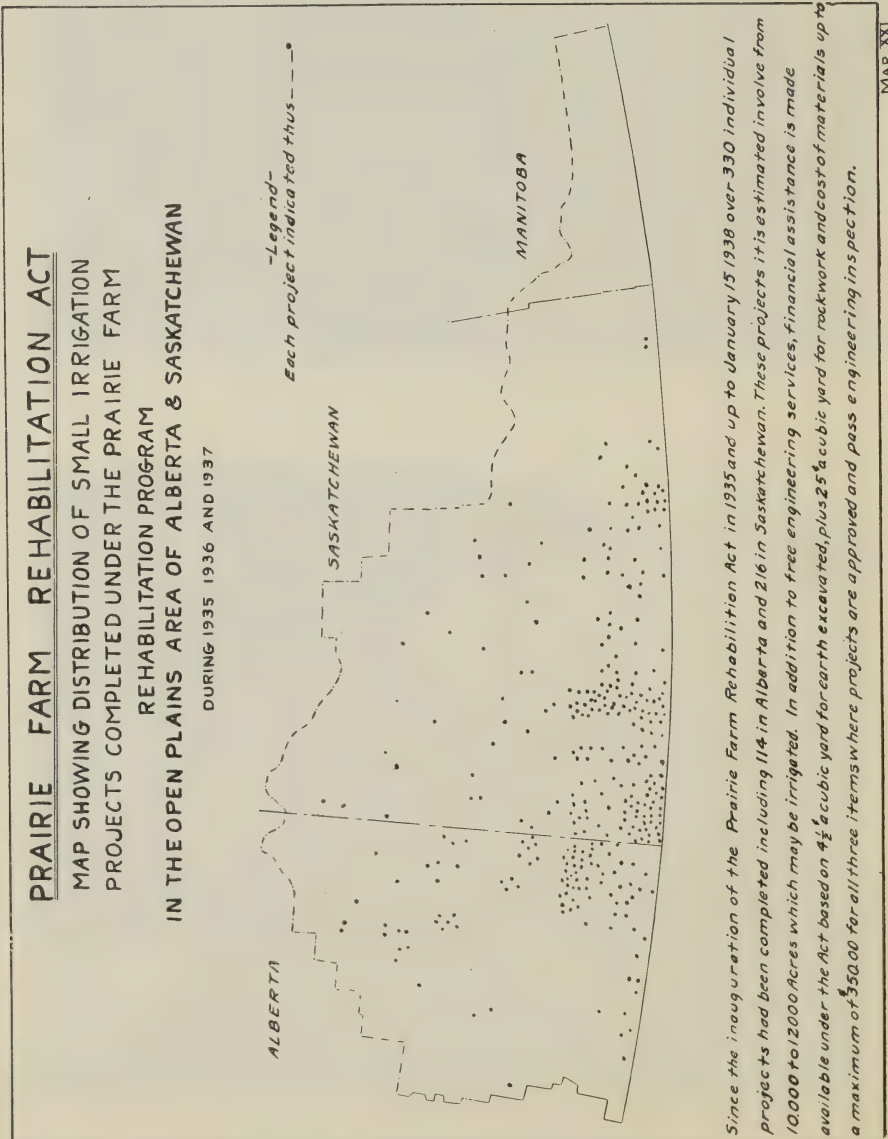
The family enjoys the dugout.

quarter of a million acres of irrigated land in Saskatchewan would, however, play an important part in providing feed for use in conjunction with community pastures being established and in permanently rehabilitating the areas hardest hit by drought.

Largely because of the relatively high rainfall there has been no irrigation development of any consequence in Manitoba.

SMALL WATER DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

A phase of the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation program that has received widespread attention and support is the assistance being provided to individual farmers and ranchers in conserving surface water supplies for domestic and stockwatering and irrigation purposes. Since the work was started in 1935 and up to January 15, 1938, over 11,000 applications have been received from the three provinces including 1,800 from Manitoba, over 7,100 from Saskatchewan and nearly 2,500 from Alberta. Nearly 5,500 have been authorized or approved for construction and 4,285 completed or reported completed, including 2,541 dug-outs, 1,414 stockwatering dams and 330 individual irrigation projects. (Maps XXI and XXII.)



PRAIRIE FARM REHABILITATION ACT

SHOWING DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNITY STOCKWATER DAMS

AS COMPLETED UNDER THE PRAIRIE FARM REHABILITATION PROGRAM



Since the inauguration of the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act in 1935 and up to Feb. 1938, 67 Community Stockwatering and Waterstorage projects had been completed in the three Provinces. These provide a storage capacity for approximately 1,150,000 acre feet of water. In addition to free engineering services, financial assistance has been provided for 100% of the cost. The total expenditure has been approximately \$96,000.00.

MAP XXII

While the conservation of moisture for crop production through cultivation, as compared to the conservation of surface water, is of major importance in the open plains area, it is a fact nevertheless that the full development of surface water resources is fundamental in the rehabilitation of agriculture throughout the drought area, not only to provide water for household use and stock throughout the farming and grazing areas but also to grow vegetables during the drier years and to grow feed to supplement dry land crops during periods of drought.

In addition to engineering services, financial assistance is provided under the Act to individuals in constructing dugouts, stockwatering dams and small irrigation projects. For dugouts, assistance is based on $4\frac{1}{2}$ cents a cubic yard for

earth excavated up to a maximum of \$75 and for dams, assistance is based on 4½ cents a cubic yard for earth excavated plus 25 cents a cubic yard for rock-work and 100 per cent cost of materials up to a maximum of \$150 for all three items in the case of a stockwatering dam and \$350 for individual irrigation projects.

During the fiscal year 1937-38, the total that will be paid in direct financial assistance for this work is estimated at \$200,000, including \$39,000 for Manitoba, over \$128,000 for Saskatchewan and less than \$33,000 for Alberta. The total paid out during the fiscal year 1935-36 was only \$4,790 and during the fiscal year 1936-37, financial assistance for this work amounted to \$85,000.

RECLAMATION WORK ON THE ARABLE LANDS OF THE OPEN PLAINS

While the work of the advisory committee on land utilization is confined to the portion of the open plains area unsuitable, because of soil and climatic conditions, for grain growing and estimated at approximately 25 per cent of the 60,000,000 acres affected by drought, all reclamation work in connection with the arable areas is carried on largely through the Dominion Experimental Farms, including district experiment sub-stations, reclamation stations, agricultural improvement associations, regrassing, tree planting, cereal production, soil investigation and seed supplies. Other activities include entomological surveys, aerial surveys and economic surveys.

District Experiment Sub-stations.—Forty-three district experiment sub-stations have been established in the three provinces where special problems exist. These stations are devoted to demonstrational and experimental work in the production of crops in areas affected by drought and soil drifting. For the most part they consist of one section of land and are privately-owned grain farms operated by the owner under direction and supervision of the Dominion Experimental Farms.

Agricultural Improvement Associations.—In addition to the establishment of district experiment sub-stations throughout the low-rainfall area in the three provinces, the rehabilitation program provides for the organization of agricultural improvement associations where individual farmers and ranchers voluntarily organize for community activity in controlling soil drifting. The introduction of summer-fallow in 1885 and Marquis wheat in 1912 were two major factors in making the Canadian prairies one of the important wheat producing areas in the world. The more recent introduction of improved cultural practices including strip farming and trash cover are considered equally important in controlling the evil of soil drifting. Serious damage has already been done in many areas by soil drifting or wind erosion even though the potentially productive power of the area has not been greatly reduced. Soil drift control is vitally important, however, in establishing a permanent agriculture on the open plains. To date, 100 agricultural improvement associations have been established in the three provinces, including 12 in Manitoba, 65 in Saskatchewan, and 23 in Alberta.

Another activity being carried on through the Dominion Experimental Farms includes reclamation stations established for the purpose of reclaiming wind-eroded soil for agricultural use or re-establishing suitable grass cover on land which has been severely damaged by drought and soil drifting and has become a menace to adjacent arable lands. This work is essentially experimental and so far stations have been established at Melita in Manitoba and at Mortlach and Cadillac in Saskatchewan.

Regrassing is an important part of the rehabilitation work and over 32 stations have been established, including 18 in Alberta and 14 in Saskatchewan. These stations are experimental and demonstrational where the best methods

for re-establishing grass on land subject to drifting are being determined for varying conditions. Regrassing of community pastures, where necessary, is being done through the Dominion Experimental Farms and grass seed in small quantities is being supplied to members of agricultural improvement associations for the purpose of establishing seed plots.



The fruits of irrigation—Pumpkin and citron in Southern Saskatchewan.



The fruits of irrigation—Pumpkin and citron in Southern Saskatchewan.

Crested wheat grass is being widely used in reclaiming wind blown soils and re-establishing pasture lands. This grass was first distributed to farmers of the Prairie Provinces about five years ago, yet the seed produced in Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba, totalled 650,000 pounds in 1937. It is widely used on sub-stations, it excels for binding soil and is used almost exclusively in seeding community pastures.

Tree planting under the rehabilitation program is carried on by the Experimental Farms Service and in addition to the free distribution of tree seedlings to farmers throughout the Prairie Provinces from the Forest Nursery Stations at Indian Head and Sutherland, Saskatchewan, which has been carried on for a number of years, the rehabilitation program provides trees together with supervisory and financial assistance in tree planting to district experiment sub-stations, agricultural improvement associations and field crop shelter belt associations. Contrary to the somewhat common belief, tree planting work is not being done with any hope of modifying the climate or rainfall since trees after all are the effect and not the cause of rainfall. Trees nevertheless are important in providing shelter for the home and for beautification and provide as well, effective means for protecting gardens from the hot winds of summer and act as snow traps during the winter. In addition, the value and possibility of trees as a means of checking wind erosion is being determined. Five associations of farmers are carrying on large scale planting of caragana shelter belts where the field value of trees is being determined on a large scale.

Large scale soil moisture conservation is being fully investigated by the Experimental Farms Service in connection with the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation program. This includes study of contouring, terracing and furrowing, to determine the value of such work in conserving moisture for crop production. A new feature of this work is the use of snow ploughs to create artificial drifts or snow banks on cultivated fields not only to prevent the snow from blowing off but also to catch as much snow as possible where it may be most useful in adding to the moisture content of the soil.

In addition to the field cultural work, a fully equipped soils laboratory has been established at the Swift Current Experimental Station as part of the rehabilitation program for the purpose of continuing investigations of soil moisture and soil drifting in the drought area of the three Prairie Provinces. The effective utilization of the limited moisture supply normally received is the major economic problem so far as agriculture on the western plains is concerned, but in addition to field work the approach to this major problem through fundamental research is important in finding methods of cultural practice whereby the moisture received may be utilized as efficiently as possible in producing crops.

SOIL SURVEY

Under the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation program, soil survey work which has been conducted for a number of years in each of the Prairie Provinces under the direction of the Provincial Universities, has been continued and extended. This work, in addition to being of fundamental value in soil research, is particularly useful in the formulation of land utilization policies and for the guidance of farmers and prospective settlers.

ECONOMIC SURVEY

A new study of its kind so far as Canada is concerned is the economic survey, including study of land utilization in Saskatchewan and Alberta, which is being conducted as part of the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation program by the Economics Branch of the Department of Agriculture in co-operation with the Department of Farm Management of the University of Saskatchewan and the provincial Department of Agriculture in Alberta.

AERIAL SURVEY

The services of the Department of National Defence were enlisted in the fight against drought in the making of aerial surveys. During 1937 approximately 7,000,000 acres were covered by aerial survey in Alberta including most of the area controlled by the Special Municipal Areas Board of Alberta and in

addition a large part of southern Saskatchewan and part of southwestern Manitoba were surveyed from the air. These aerial surveys are used more particularly in locating possible water storage sites for irrigation purposes and for stock-watering and in addition are being used in conjunction with the economic survey. This type of survey is exceedingly rapid and it is expected that through the use of this modern method, surveys in connection with various phases of Prairie Farm Rehabilitation will be greatly speeded up and cost greatly reduced.

SUMMARY

The work being done under the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation program is, strictly speaking, the responsibility of the provinces, particularly since the natural resources, including lands and surface water, were transferred from Dominion control to Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta. The problems arising out of drought however, in the open plains area of these three provinces, are of such magnitude that the solution of these problems must of necessity be worked out on a national scale. At the same time the Dominion Government is, so far as the expenditure of federal funds is involved, directly concerned in alleviating conditions of drought to the greatest possible degree and thereby reducing and if possible entirely eliminating the necessity of expending public funds for relief in the drought area.

During the past 30 years, the three Prairie Provinces have produced, it is estimated, eight billion bushels of wheat, estimated at a total value of ten billion dollars. There is moreover, no reason to doubt the ability of this area to repeat this performance during the next 30 years or less. This enormous volume of new wealth produced from the open plains in the past, has contributed greatly to the economic life of Canada as a whole. Aside therefore from any responsibility as between the Dominion and provincial Governments, it may be considered sound business on the part of the Dominion Government to give leadership and financial assistance in establishing a more secure and self-sustaining agriculture on the prairies. There is no reason to doubt that years of more abundant rainfall will return sooner or later and it might be accepted as a certainty that drought such as has occurred in the past will recur. A danger to be considered is that with the return of rainfall, need of rehabilitation may be forgotten, particularly since the object of the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation program in establishing a more secure agriculture and providing against the dry years can be best achieved during years of more favourable rainfall. It is for this reason chiefly that rehabilitation work needs to be carried on continuously.

An important factor contributing to results so far achieved under the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation program is the active public support received. This support is not only important in that it reflects an earnest desire on the part of all concerned to establish a more secure livelihood on the open plains and their belief that this can be done, but it also is important in that general public support is necessary for success because of the wide spread and general nature of the work.

While very definite results have been achieved in practically all lines of activities under way, much of the work so far has of necessity been of a preliminary nature and it is only within the last year that a more definite working policy has been evolved.

While three quarters of a million dollars was voted for the fiscal year 1935-36, only \$342,424.01 was expended. During the fiscal year 1936-37, a total of \$629,798.61 was expended of the million dollars voted. A larger portion of the vote has been expended during the present fiscal year since it is estimated that out of the two million appropriated, \$1,775,000 will be expended, and with the preliminary surveys and studies that have been made, it is estimated that upwards to four million dollars may be effectively expended during the coming fiscal year.

LAND UTILIZATION BOARD

By act of the provincial legislature of Saskatchewan of 1935 the Land Utilization Board was brought into being. The board consists of five members: the Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Dr. F. H. Auld, chairman; the Deputy Minister of Natural Resources, Mr. J. R. Hill; the Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs, Mr. J. J. Smith; a commissioner of the local government board, Mr. J. N. Bayne; and Dr. William Allen of the University of Saskatchewan.

The land utilization board is the legal agency to handle the land for the work being done under the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act.

P.F.R.A. RECLAMATION WORK—CADILLAC, SASKATCHEWAN.



Cadillac Reclamation Area—Crop of spring rye grown in the list rows which has provided a cover and prevented drifting.

The efforts of the land utilization board of this province are directed towards the withdrawal from agricultural use of lands which are better adapted for grazing purposes. There has been some abandonment of the least productive land, and governmental agencies, both municipal and provincial, are now working towards a centralized control of tax-delinquent lands which are no longer being farmed but are in the process of being restored to the public domain through tax forfeiture and other legislation. This trend will be facilitated by recent amendments to the Land Utilization Act which give the board authority to accept the assignment of tax sale certificates from a municipality and take the necessary proceedings to acquire title to land which is unsuitable for agricultural purposes. The board may also accept a transfer of title to lands which are unsuitable for agricultural purposes. Where the tax sale certificates are transferred to the board or where a municipality agrees by resolution to transfer to the land utilization board title to land of this kind when obtained, the registrar will issue title without payment of fees and all arrears of taxes will be cancelled.

The amendment to the Act also provides that, with the approval of the Lieutenant Governor in Council, the board may appropriate any land where that action is deemed necessary for the purpose of carrying out any land utilization scheme. If a dispute arises concerning the amount of compensation for the parties entitled to same, provision is made for the matter to be referred to arbitration.

NORTHERN SETTLERS' RE-ESTABLISHMENT BRANCH¹

This branch of the Department of Municipal Affairs was set up on September 1, 1935, to assist the large number of settlers, who had moved to northern Saskatchewan from the southern dried-out areas after 1929, in re-establishing themselves. At the same time the branch took over all the 1931 provincial loan settlers, the 1932, 1933 and 1934 relief loan settlers, the 1934 Mennonite settlers, and all the 100 per cent direct relief cases formerly administered by the Northern Areas Branch of the Bureau of Labour and Public Welfare. The number of families taken over was as follows:—

1931, 32, 33, 34, and Mennonite settlers	963
Other Relief Cases	4,806

The movement of settlers from the south alone created a serious problem for the Government as an examination of the census figures shows an astounding increase in population. It is found that in the five northern federal constituencies of The Battlefords, North Battleford, Prince Albert, Melfort, and Mackenzie (which area fairly closely corresponds with the field covered by this branch), the increase in population from 1931 to 1936 was 20·32 per cent when the increase for the whole province for the corresponding period was less than 1 per cent; and that the increase for the 15-year period, 1921 to 1936 was approximately 50 per cent. The 1936 census further shows that considerably more than one-fourth of the whole population lives in these five constituencies and this population with the exception of two small cities and a few towns is entirely rural. It is interesting to note also that since then there has been a further trek north during 1936 and 1937.

It is obvious that since only a small part of this territory had been developed or partly developed at the time of the influx, the land could not be expected to support such an increase in population without some outside aid. Therefore, the objectives of the branch have been concentrated to the end of making the settlers self-supporting as soon as possible by helping to develop and exploit new territory, and at the same time make that territory revenue producing. In statement this may seem simple but the work involved has many ramifications since the settlers came from all walks of life, a large number being without farming equipment, all without means of support, and the available settlement lands adapted to different agricultural pursuits. All this, therefore, from a colonization point of view, not forgetting the high standard of living to which these people were accustomed, created a problem entirely different from any in the past. It necessitated the giving of individual attention to all settlers, and this principle of close supervision determined the set-up of the branch. Besides this also, some settlers have had to be moved from lands which have been found unproductive and in other cases some lands required to be drained.

Reorganization of the branch took place on April 19, 1937, with G. J. Matte as commissioner. At present the field staff consists of 29 district inspectors, 2 location officers or camp foremen, 2 drainage engineers, 2 chief inspectors, and a general supervisor. Besides this, an adequate office staff is employed in Regina which varies in number as the work is seasonal. Changes in policy have been made and in practice it will appear that they have been progressive. Granting advances on loans based on the merits and circumstances of the settler, and

¹Information furnished by courtesy of G. J. Matte, Commissioner, Northern Settlers' Re-establishment Branch, Regina.

dealing with each individual case on his home place as much as possible has proved very satisfactory as the psychological effect is that it has placed the onus on the settler himself. For example, as a general rule advances for work stock and machinery are not made until a reasonable amount of clearing of land has been done. Then, assistance in breaking is also given up to a certain acreage, depending on the needs of the settler, and the settler is required, as much as possible, to make his own arrangements for this breaking, always dependent, of course, on the approval of the inspector. The branch merely does the financing and guiding. This same principle is also followed in the purchasing of live stock, machinery, building materials, and all other needs, so as to place as much responsibility as possible on the settler, thereby fostering initiative and good management.



NORTHERN SASKATCHEWAN SETTLER

The settler; G. J. Matte, Commissioner Northern Settlers Re-establishment; J. J. Smith, Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs; Hon. R. J. M. Parker, Minister of Municipal Affairs, Saskatchewan.



Their northern home.

Custom breaking was initiated last year and has proved most encouraging. Besides, it will certainly speed up and make for permanency in establishing settlers, which after all is the main objective. A total of 33,227 acres of land was cleared during the summer and 28,597 acres broken. In some inspectorates this averaged 17 acres per settler. An experiment in clearing with heavy machinery was also made last fall and it will appear that this has proved so successful that a considerable amount of this work will be done during the coming year. A heavy crawl-type tractor pushing a ten-foot brush cutter is used and on an average 24 acres in an eight-hour day are cleared. This machine does excellent work cutting brush and trees up to eight inches in diameter.

The above outline of method followed in granting assistance applies generally to settlers already located on land, but in new blocks being opened up for settlement and handed over to this branch by the Department of Natural Resources, a somewhat different procedure is followed. For illustration, let us take a typical block where about 75 quarter-sections have been declared suitable for cultivation. In this case, a location officer or camp foreman is appointed and he, with the help of from 8 to 12 prospective settlers, immediately puts up a set of buildings of the settler type on a quarter centrally located. This set of buildings consists of a house, barn, an outbuilding (which is used for a storehouse and office while the camp is in operation), and a well. Then the settlers are allowed to file on their homestead with the location officer and proceed to put up their own buildings, usually by co-operating with each other. During this building period, all incoming settlers live at the camp (a cook having been engaged by the branch) and their meals are charged to their accounts at cost. As soon as his buildings are up, the settler is allowed to bring in his family, and the program of re-establishment from here goes on as heretofore described. Incidentally, the average advance made to settlers for building materials is only approximately \$90. The reason for this low figure is that good building logs are always available and native lumber and shingles can be purchased at a very reasonable price in bulk quantities by the foremen. With this advance and proper guidance, it is found that a comfortable set of buildings can be put up.

The location officer or foreman is employed until all suitable lands in the block have been taken up, the families settled, and a start made towards developing the land. Then the local district inspector takes over the administration of the loans from this point. (The camp site is occupied by the settler who filed on that quarter and the buildings are charged up to his loan at cost.) Up to the present, four blocks, as outlined above, have been settled and the camps closed, and two more are still open.

The duties of the field officers of the branch are many and varied. They must see to the needs of the settlers as regards food and clothing, hospitalization and medical attention; feed, fodder and seed; building materials; live stock and farm equipment; clearing and breaking of land; and besides, they must take an active part in the organization and building of schools; the construction of roads and drains; and their advice is sought in all other forms of local improvements. The directing and promoting of the type of farming most suited to each particular district also is a duty of the local officer, and so it must necessarily follow that the success of the whole scheme depends to a great extent on the field staff; and the degree of success is proportionate to the number of families and the size of the territory allocated to each inspector. It has been found that an inspector, provided he can obtain part-time stenographic help, can quite satisfactorily supervise 200 families.

It is interesting to note here that the northern part of the province is not adapted to the growing of cereal crops year after year as the southern part because of the fact that the soil is less fertile. It necessarily follows, therefore, that diversified farming must be resorted to and the settlers must be educated

to that fact. An educational campaign, therefore, along these lines was found to be necessary and it has been gratifying to find that this has not been overlooked by the administration. The members of the field staff have been given short courses by the Extension Department of the University and are making every effort to promote the type of farming adapted to the soils found in the different localities. For example, it has been found that the northern grey bush soils, formerly considered of little value for grain growing, are ideal for



A happy family.



Clearing land in Northern Saskatchewan the modern way.

growing alfalfa, and a new agricultural industry has sprung up within the last two years. It has generally become known now that northern Saskatchewan grows the cleanest and hardiest alfalfa seed on the continent—the result being that the demand far exceeds the supply. Alfalfa growers' associations have and are springing up everywhere and there is the promise of this developing into an

important industry. In 1937 crop returns were as high as 600 pounds to the acre, which sold net at 26 cents a pound. The Whitefox association alone sold 350,000 pounds in the United States at the above price and could not by any means fill all the other orders received from seed houses. This branch last year supplied 16,000 pounds of seed to its settlers and it is expected that at least 30,000 pounds will be required in 1938. In very many cases settlers on new lands have permanently gone off the relief rolls in two years. In one particular case a settler harvested a \$2,200 crop on 17 acres of land in 1937.

The construction of drains, as previously mentioned, has been a very important factor in the re-establishment scheme. Large tracts of land have been made productive by drainage and the moving of many families has been avoided. This work has and is being carried on principally in the Carrot river and Shand creek districts. These two districts have soils which compare favourably with the best in the province and nearly all lands have been filed on for homesteads, but it was found that in average years they are too wet for putting into crop reasonably early enough. Since the country is very level and wooded, and the water courses frequently blocked by old beaver dams and windfalls, the water from the deep melting snows had inadequate outlets. In 1936 two competent engineers were appointed to investigate the possibility of draining these lands, and the reports submitted stated that it could be done at a cost of approximately \$120,000, completing the work in two years' time. With financial assistance from the federal Government, this work was begun immediately and was practically completed last fall at a total expenditure of \$92,478.74. (The difference in actual cost and estimates is accounted for by work done by relief recipients on their back relief.)

About 1,100 settlers benefited from this drainage program. In addition, it afforded work and wages for many, thereby relieving the relief problem. As many as 600 men were employed at one time during the summer months on this work, more than 50 per cent of whom were relief recipients. It was found that on account of the land being so level, the ditches could in most places be built along the road allowances, and by throwing the earth on one side of the ditch only and levelling it off with a road grader, a very good road could be built.

It goes without saying that northern re-establishment, as it is now being carried on in Saskatchewan, is absolutely necessary in order to cope with a very serious problem which has developed as a direct result of the several years of drought and crop failures and that it is a tremendous undertaking. But all in all there is certainly a reasonable measure of success already. As evidence of this, there is already a shortage of available lands for those wishing to make application to come under the scheme, and it has been found necessary to limit the assistance to those who have already moved north prior to the beginning of the current year.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Direct Relief Expenditures—

1935-36	Relief year.....	\$ 791,512 36
1936-37	Relief year.....	1,022,879 10

NOTE.—Increase attributed to crop failure in the northwestern part of province and a further influx of settlers from the south.

Total number of Direct Relief Cases (families) as at December 31, 1937—5,738.

Re-Establishment Expenditures.—

	1936 Agreement to March 31, 1937
Live stock.....	\$ 60,728 40
Equipment.....	25,167 42
Feed.....	1,520 70
Building materials.....	8,119 82
Miscellaneous.....	1,638 40
Transportation.....	2,940 20
Surveys.....	32,907 87
Drainage.....	40,827 94
Total.....	\$ 173,850 75

Re-Establishment Expenditures.—

	1937 Agreement to Dec. 31, 1937
Work stock.....	\$ 102,116 88
Milk cows, brood sows, poultry.....	8,363 78
Freight on live stock and effects.....	6,353 04
Feed and petroleum for breaking.....	1,368 24
Moving settlers effects and dependents.....	1,326 04
Feed for winter maintenance.....	119 79
Building and fencing materials.....	26,296 81
Implements and repairs.....	87,922 67
Miscellaneous hardware and supplies.....	981 50
Clearing and breaking land.....	59,916 04
Construction of drains.....	51,650 80
Total.....	\$ 346,415 59

Total number of families who received re-establishment assistance to December 31, 1937—3,018.

No. of acres cleared.....	33,227
No. of acres broken.....	28,597

Percentage of settlers receiving assistance in 1937, who may be expected to be self-sustaining in 1938, under normal crop conditions—30 per cent.

Section VIII

FORCES AT WORK MAKING FOR STABILITY IN SASKATCHEWAN WHAT OF THE FUTURE?

The wisdom learned from the difficult experiences of the last nine years is being used to lay foundations which should make for greater stability on the prairies in the future. First of all, more attention has been given to weather conditions than ever before in the history of Western Canada. The real significance of the dry climate of these great inland plains is being realized. Our farmers now know that agricultural technique of the future must be based more and more on the expectation of low rainfall and the conservation of all available moisture. It must be based on the acceptance of the climatic limitations of the country with the certain knowledge that these very limitations—dry weather conditions and cool summer nights—are the two main factors in producing the superior grade of wheat which has made the name of Canada famous in the wheat markets of the world.

The investigations of Dr. Charles Abbott of the Smithsonian Institute seem to be the most reliable available in respect to weather conditions. His conclusions that temperature and precipitation variations tend to repeat themselves indicate that drought may be expected to recur in the future in the great central plains, but also that years of heavy precipitation may be expected in the future as in the past. There will be certain years within a decade which will be drier than the other years. There will be groups of years within a period of 50 years that will be extremely dry, constituting a serious drought. All of these situations will have to be counted on and planned for. Our governments, through the Departments of Agriculture, both federal and provincial, have definitely set themselves to this task. And while Dr. Abbott's investigations have led him to believe that we are nearing the end of the present drought cycle and that there will not be another major drought for 40 years, yet plans are being laid to meet the dry years which may be expected at rather frequent intervals.

It should be noted that if there is subsoil moisture, a good crop may be produced with as low as eight inches of rainfall between the middle of May and the middle of July if the rain comes at the right time. Timing is as important in rainfall for a wheat crop as it is with a golf stroke. A good crop of wheat may result if the rain comes at the time it is most needed, even though the quantity of rainfall may not be very great.

The leading agricultural authorities of Western Canada have not lost faith in the wheat growing possibilities of the prairie country. Honourable J. G. Taggart, Minister of Agriculture for Saskatchewan, in his evidence before the Rowell Commission, stated, "In my judgment, then, first of all the rainfall is not declining; secondly, if the rainfall is maintained at approximately its present or average level during the next 20 or 30 years, there is no indication at present of the productivity of the soil declining seriously due either to physical condition or chemical exhaustion, although it is admitted that both these factors are less favourable than they were 20 or 30 years ago."

The federal Government at Washington appointed the Great Plains Drought Area Committee of the United States to study the drought problem as it relates to the western states. After four years of investigation the report of their findings may be summed up as follows: "The drought area can be made permanently habitable by proper methods of agriculture and long-range planning."

The report on the rehabilitation of the dry areas of Alberta states (page eleven), "Early records very effectively answer a mis-statement that is frequently

made to-day, namely that the climate of Western Canada has changed and is becoming more dry as the years go by. This is definitely not so. The western plains have always been subject to recurring cycles of deficient rainfall."

The Honourable George Spence, Minister of Public Works of the province of Saskatchewan, and a grain grower of long experience, operating in the south-western portion of the province, calls attention in a recent radio address to the abundant crops that were harvested on the prairies for many years. "Over a period of more than 30 years the prairie has grown tremendous crops of No. 1 hard wheat. The long-time record previous to 1930 was good, particularly in the heavy land districts of Saskatchewan. Yields of from 30 to 40 bushels to the acre were not uncommon. For proof you have only to look at the branch lines of railroads that look like a web all over the countryside, and the grain handling facilities, elevators at country points and the great terminal elevators at the head of the lakes. From Western Canada between seven and eight billion bushels of wheat were shipped through these elevators from 1910 to 1936 inclusive, valued at a sum in excess of ten billion dollars."

Mr. Spence, after a careful study of climate and weather conditions, is emphatic in the opinion that a change from very dry to wet years is inevitable and that again the fertile prairie soil will produce heavy crops.

Experiences of the drought period have led to widespread efforts to conserve the moisture resulting from winter snows and to prevent the loss of water from spring floods. Greater rainfall in the autumn of 1937 over large areas in Saskatchewan and abundant snowfall this winter give promise of a return of years of greater precipitation which should result in the accumulation of subsoil moisture which is necessary for the production of regularly recurring crops.

THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE PROBLEM

Professor G. E. Britnell of the Department of Economics, University of Saskatchewan, in an article entitled, "The Rehabilitation of the Prairie Wheat Economy" published in the Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science, November, 1937, sets forth the situation with great understanding in the following paragraph:—

"Standards of living in the prairie wheat economy have been depressed by overhead costs, recurring cycles of drought, specialization in wheat, and dependence on prices determined in world markets. The record of the last eight or nine years has brought suggestions that the greater part of the area should be abandoned or allowed to revert to range use, although a more general assumption has been that drought would give way to years of greater precipitation and that wheat prices should show a measure of recovery. Drought and depression have indicated that throughout the region emphasis has shifted from problems of exploitation to problems of conservation and that, accordingly, an attempt must be made to re-establish the economy on a basis which will reduce the waste of human and economic resources in the future. Individual initiative and local group action will undoubtedly continue to play an important part in the adaptation of agricultural techniques to climatic and soil conditions, but correction of the most glaring mistakes in settlement and land utilization policies demands careful planning and constructive action on a fairly large scale by federal and provincial governments. From the national or social point of view, more is at stake than relief budgets and rehabilitation expenditures, onerous as the financial burden of these charges may be. Successive years of extreme poverty in a depressing environment have begun to sap the morale of all but the most fortunate or the most determined members of the prairie community, and continuance or recurrence of such conditions must ultimately produce a demoralized agricultural population. The unconsidered optimism and gambling spirit engendered by three decades of rapid expansion under favourable economic

conditions and concentration on wheat may be replaced, not by more sober and conventional standards of achievement, but by sullen apathy and the steady deterioration of all social, cultural, and economic standards."

GOVERNMENTS ALIVE TO THE SITUATION

With truth it can be stated that the weaknesses in our agricultural economy referred to in the above quotation are fully appreciated by our Governments, both federal and provincial, and every effort is being made to meet the situation. As we have already seen in Section VII by means of the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act thousands of farmers are being put into a condition where even in drought years they will be able to subsist by their own efforts and in good years they may expect ample income. The Land Utilization Board is helping to correct the most glaring mistakes in the opening up of the land for settlement when much land was broken up which should have been conserved as cattle ranges. The work of the Northern Settlers' Re-establishment Board is of great value. It must be noted too that the Departments of Agriculture and the universities are carrying on soil surveys of far reaching importance, grasses especially suited for the soil and moisture conditions of the open prairie country are being developed. Re-grassing is an important part of the rehabilitation work and 18 demonstration stations have been established in Alberta and 14 in Saskatchewan. Farmers are being shown the value of strip farming to prevent soil drifting and also how to renew the fibrous matter in the soil. The rust menace has been reduced to a minimum and the grasshopper menace can, to a great extent, be controlled. The soil has been classified and settlers are not allowed to take up unproductive land.

The Dominion-Provincial Seed Exchange Plan is another important development with the object of maintaining and improving the high quality of the Canadian wheat crop. This plan is simply an exchange of commercial grain for pure variety seed, cleaned, inspected, graded and ready for the drill. For example, the basis of exchange in 1936-37 was as follows:—

WHEAT

COMMERCIAL WHEAT FOR FIELD INSPECTED WHEAT IN CARLOADS— MARQUIS AND REWARD:

130 bushels of 1 Hard Commercial for 100 bushels graded seed.
130 bushels of 1 Northern for 100 bushels graded seed.
135 bushels of 2 Northern for 100 bushels graded seed.
140 bushels of 3 Northern for 100 bushels graded seed.
150 bushels of 4 Northern for 100 bushels graded seed.
155 bushels of 5 Northern for 100 bushels graded seed.
160 bushels of 6 Northern for 100 bushels graded seed.

The chief advantage of the plan to the purchaser is that he does not need to concern himself with either the value of his commercial grain when exchanged for seed, or the price of the seed. He does not have to add the price of sacks because the seed is shipped in bulk, and he does not have to figure on the freight because the Dominion Seed Branch pays it. He can exchange his grain when prices are low, just as well as when the price of commercial wheat is high.

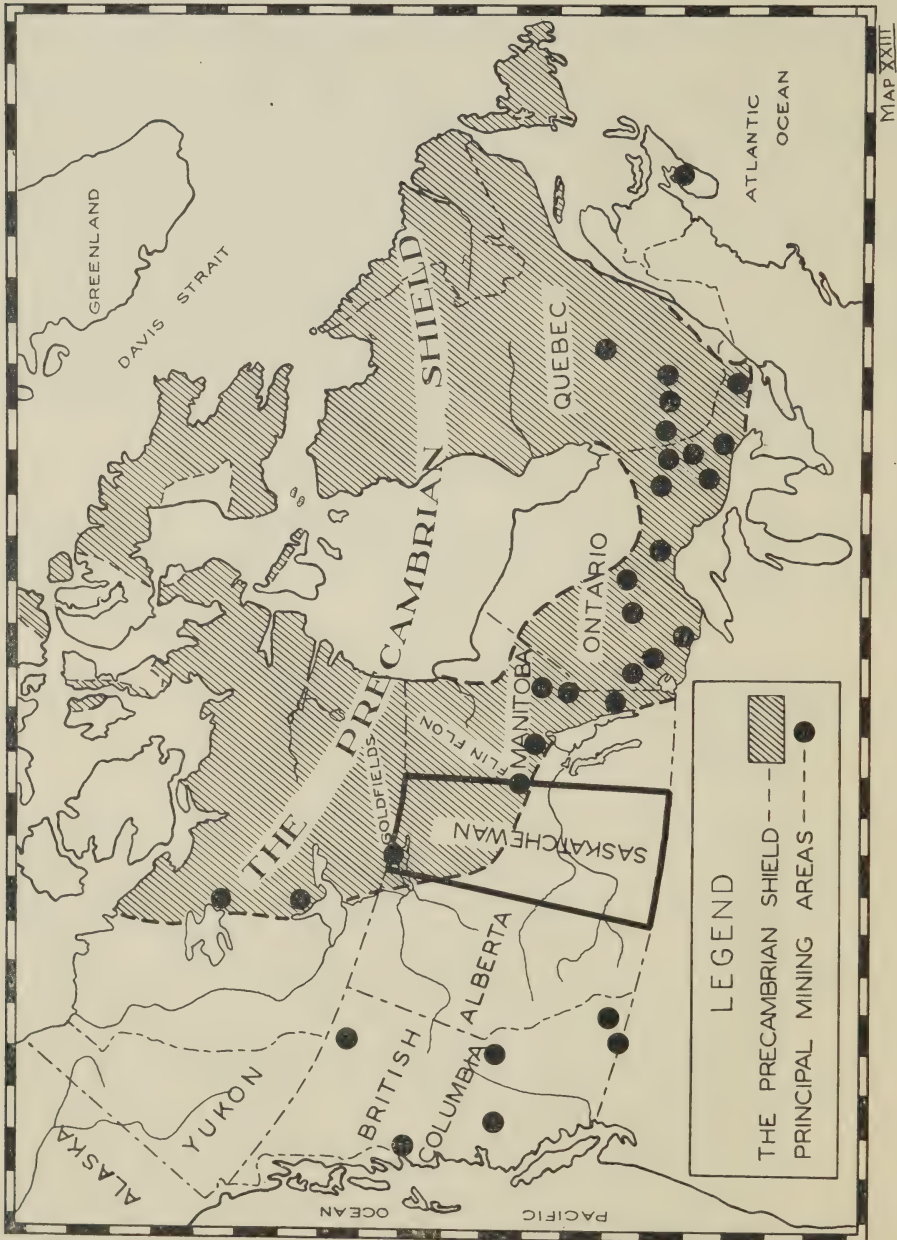
A great deal of praise is due to elevator companies who have interested themselves in the plan. They have allowed their agents to canvass farmers to secure carloads and have made the facilities of their organizations available for receiving the farmers' grain and distributing the seed when it is received.

No charges have been made for this service. Moreover, the elevator companies have paid full local track price for the grain delivered in exchange for seed, and have not charged any selling commission nor elevation charges.

The Saskatchewan Department of Agriculture is attempting under this scheme to provide seed of satisfactory varieties so that the wheat marketed from Western Canada will maintain its high reputation. The Dominion Department of Agriculture has given approval to this effort by paying the freight on these movements of pure variety seed.

MINING DEVELOPMENT

In dealing with the forces which are at work making for stability in Saskatchewan reference should be made to the mining development which is taking place in the northern part of the province. Map No. 23 shows that some 80,000 square miles or almost one-third of the total area of Saskatchewan lies within the Pre-Cambrian shield. In this area important discoveries have been made



during the past few years.¹ The records show that gold produced in Saskatchewan in 1930 amounted to exactly 500 ounces. This had increased to 5,500 ounces in 1934, while last year (1937) the figure was 65,423 ounces, or 130 times as much as seven years ago.

Silver production, which was 5,620 ounces in 1930, increased to 88,033 ounces in 1934 and to 817,948 ounces in 1937, or 145 times as much as seven years ago.

Copper production increased from 123,610 lb. in 1930 to 6,682,000 lb. in 1934 and to 22,366,000 lb. in 1937, or 180 times as much as in 1930.

Zinc production rose from 256,627 lb. in 1930 to 2,113,950 lb. in 1934 and to 32,198,000 lb. in 1937, that is 125 times as much as in 1930.

In dollar value Saskatchewan's metallic mineral production was only \$46,049 in 1930. This increased to \$744,759 in 1934, and to \$7,454,000 in 1937, or 160 times the value in 1930.

Up in the far northwestern corner of the province on the north shore of lake Athabasca, at Goldfields, the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company have not only been busily engaged in development work on a gold mine, now definitely known to contain millions of tons of gold bearing ore, but that company is rushing to completion a 1,000-tons-a-day mill to crush and treat that ore and are constructing one of the most interesting hydro-electric works in this Dominion, which is world-renowned for its hydro-electric enterprises. Upon this great undertaking—mine, mill and hydro-electric plant—between two and three million dollars will be expended.

The Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company undertaking at Goldfields will be Saskatchewan's second large mining enterprise, the first being the huge plant of the Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting Company which straddles the Manitoba-Saskatchewan boundary at Flin Flon, with the major portion of the buildings and of the ore body on the Saskatchewan side, and with the hydro-electric plant wholly within Saskatchewan at Island Falls on the Churchill river. This is primarily a base metal mine producing enormous quantities of copper and zinc with gold, silver and other metals obtained incidental to these major recoveries.

Further evidence of the development of mining in Saskatchewan is provided by the volume of work handled by the Mines Branch. Mineral claims in force April 30, 1936, numbered 1,995; a year later the figure was 2,460. Certificates of work issued in 1936 totalled 416; this was more than doubled last year to 884. Transfers registered in 1936 numbered 274; last year the number was 601.

Except for the mining areas in British Columbia and Nova Scotia, mining in Canada is wholly within the Pre-Cambrian shield. An almost unbroken chain of mining areas follows the southern fringe of the shield, through Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and on up to Great Bear Lake in the Northwest Territories. Within the shield are all the great mines of Ontario and Quebec. This shield may yet do for Saskatchewan what it has done for Ontario and Quebec.

Working together in the utmost harmony and in full co-operation, the Government of Saskatchewan and the federal Government of Canada are assisting in the opening up and development of this great storehouse of mineral wealth.

FARMERS ARE HELPING THEMSELVES

Farmers' organizations of various kinds have come into being in order that the farmers themselves may study their own problems and learn how to solve them. Under the aegis of the Department of Agriculture, assisted by the Extension Department of the University, short courses are being given in various centres of the province in order to instruct the young people in better ways of

¹ Information supplied by the Hon. W. F. Kerr, Minister of Natural Resources, Saskatchewan.

farming. One such school, held at Swift Current recently, had an attendance of over 200 youths anxious to learn the best ways of dealing with the situation presented by the prairie soil and climate. It is work of this nature that gives one confidence in the future of agriculture on the prairies.

Reference has already been made in Section IV as to the readiness with which returning moisture helps to solve the economic problems of the Manitoba farmer. The same has also been shown in Saskatchewan.

A study was made of four municipalities, namely, R.M. of Sarnia No. 221, R.M. of Craik No. 222, R.M. of Big Arm No. 251 and R.M. of Arm River No. 252. These municipalities were among the first to suffer crop failures and through the years 1930, 1931, 1932, 1933 and 1934 little or no crop was harvested there. In 1935 a partial crop was harvested but it was of little commercial value because of rust. But in 1936 these municipalities harvested a commercial crop of from 10 to 15 bushels per acre.

The reduction in relief costs as a result of the 1936 crop was most striking, especially when one considers the long period of drought which had been experienced in those rural municipalities.

The actual figures for the four municipalities as to relief in the year 1934-35 as compared with the year 1936-37 are as follows:—

	1934-35	1936-37
	\$	\$
R.M. of Sarnia, No. 221.....	73,025 45	5,062 90
R.M. of Craik, No. 222.....	48,772 59	3,762 98
R.M. of Big Arm, No. 251.....	28,117 86	1,769 86
R.M. of Arm River, No. 252.....	23,123 00	2,010 76

It was found that practically every farmer resident within these municipalities was in a position to take care of his own subsistence requirements from his resources and the relief that was granted was almost entirely given to persons who had lost their farms during the drought period, or who had failed to sow crop in the spring of 1936. This would seem to indicate that no matter how severe drought conditions have been, those persons who stick to the land are able to get off relief with the first crop harvested. The above facts should show that our farming population is keen to get off relief at the first sign of a crop and also that even a small crop will enable a man to stand upon his own feet.

The above information also indicates that the land has not been permanently injured by soil drifting or continued drought but that the land readily responds to moisture.

Enquiries at the office of an investment company reveal the readiness of the prairie farmer to face up to his debts even with one crop after a series of bad years. One farmer near Colfax suffered crop failure for a period of five consecutive years. In 1936 he had a good crop on one and a half sections of land which he farms. From that crop, in addition to taking care of local responsibilities, including implement debts, he was able to pay some \$3,052 on account of the liabilities against this land. In addition to this he was able to lay aside sufficient funds to carry him through the next year.

In the Central Butte area, where very adverse conditions had prevailed for several years, a good crop was harvested in 1936 and many farmers were able to make most substantial payments on account of liabilities against their land. The district around Briercrest has received considerable unfortunate publicity because of an article published in an eastern magazine as to the devastating results of the drought and soil drifting in that area, yet Briercrest harvested a good crop in 1936. One farmer realized over \$5,000 from the sale of his crop.

Another farmer told the writer of this report that after paying all operating and household expenses, his taxes, and all other liabilities, he was able to "tuck away" as he expressed it, \$4,000 as the result of the 1936 crop. It is only fair to add that this man, a particularly good farmer, is in most fortunate circumstances with his farm of $1\frac{1}{4}$ sections of land unencumbered.

These illustrations are quoted simply to offset some of the fears which are being expressed by both East and West as to the future of the prairies. Men who have made a careful study of the situation during the past twelve months are still strong in their faith in the future of this country. It should, however, be stated most emphatically that the West cannot hope to be placed upon a sound economic basis until some far reaching adjustments are made to enable the prairie farmer to meet the ever present handicap of high freight rates and high tariffs. In the future also, he will borrow less money than in the past but at lower rates of interest. These three items—freight rates, tariffs and interest rates play a most important part in the prairie economy.

FINE LEADERSHIP

As one comes in contact with the members of the Government and the officials who are handling the situation one cannot but be impressed with their resourcefulness, their courage and their faith. These men believe in the country and are confident that the measures which are now being adopted to rehabilitate this land will prove so successful that when, in the course of time, another extended drought period may appear, the country will be able to carry through on its own resources. These men are also determined to preserve the good name and the credit of Saskatchewan. In his budget speech of February 17, 1938, the Premier of the province, the Honourable William Patterson, said, "A government which does not make every effort to keep faith with its creditors is not likely to keep faith with its electors. . . . Credit means a great deal more than the ability to borrow. It includes reputation, character, confidence and faith."

THE WESTERN SPIRIT

The great bulk of the people are carrying on and looking hopefully to the time when prosperity will again shine upon them. In spite of discouraging conditions the acreage has been well maintained. One of the finest illustrations of the spirit of the western farmer is the fact that while the blazing heat of the cloudless skies was burning up his 1937 crop he toiled away in temperatures of 100 or more to prepare his summer-fallow for the 1938 sowing. The farmer, his wife and children are matching their courage and powers of endurance against difficult conditions but they will win out and they deserve to win.

Those who have stayed by the old farm are now buoyed up with a great hope because of the abundant moisture in the form of rain and snow of the past six months. The men who were on poorer land and found it necessary to move to the north are carving out new farms in the spirit of the old pioneers. The following letter from a settler dated from Carragana, Saskatchewan, January 25, 1938, illustrates the spirit of the Saskatchewan farmer of to-day. This man left his farm in the south and rented a farm four miles north of Carragana. In his letter he states, "I shall have 100 acres in crop this year and am to break 50 more acres on the farm. There is lots of work to be had at profitable wages.

"It was hard to leave our farm in the south after 30 years of our young lives being spent there, but the thought of more and still more relief and no prospect of a crop decided us to try and earn our living and give our boy (age twenty) a chance to be a man.

"If we can only become self-supporting and eat our own bread again we shall be well repaid for our efforts."

The investigations and studies which have been made of the land and soil of Saskatchewan during the past few years do not justify the hope so long maintained, that Saskatchewan would yet be the home of millions of people. We are coming to see that under our present economy Saskatchewan may not support more than about a million people, although with the development of new drought-resistant crops and with the opening up of Saskatchewan's mineral resources the population might be considerably increased. The policies outlined above for the rehabilitation of Saskatchewan will mean that it can offer a good standard of living and comfortable homes to at least ten per cent of Canada's population. In days to come the story of the fight which has been put up for the last eight years by the people of Saskatchewan, and which will be carried on for the next few years to make it possible for this province to support its people and produce wealth to contribute to the general prosperity of the Dominion, will be a thrilling one. Canada as a whole will yet be proud of the men and women who brought the prairies through this most trying period of its history.

The men of the West have been encouraged through the years because of the faith which the men of the East have had as to the eventual recovery of the West and as to the importance of the West to the Dominion as a whole. This faith was well expressed by Mr. Thomas Bradshaw, President of the North American Life Assurance Company, at the annual meeting of the company in January last. "The statement sometimes made that the East can very well do without the West cannot be too strongly denied. Such statements must be made either in ignorance or without due consideration. The fact is that the West has contributed in great measure to Canada, and to the East in particular. Although, through a succession of crop failures and low prices the West has had to be temporarily helped by the federal government, this assistance should be cheerfully and willingly given, because I firmly believe that the East is debtor to the West and will be so for many years to come.

"One has only to consider the growth in the Western Provinces from 1900 to 1930, and then to realize the close parallel of the growth of industry in the East. As more western land was brought under cultivation during this period and more grain flowed from the prairies to world markets, more factories were built and more goods were produced in Eastern Canada. The conclusion is inescapable that it was western income which in part at least nourished and stimulated the growth of Toronto, Montreal, Hamilton and other industrial cities.

"Because the West has been coming through trying times in the last eight years, struggling valiantly against successive crop failures and low prices, against discouraged finances and actual need, are we to forget both the past and the potentialities of the future? We would make one of our greatest mistakes if we were to sell the West short. It will again flourish and prosper as in the past, and its products will help to keep our railways, our steamships and industries busy, as well as making a very important addition to the national trade. Canada can never be a great nation without a strong, solvent West."

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